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PERIODICAL

APR 5 1949

DETENT

For conditions of sale and supply of Punch  
see bottom of last page of text**Imperial Typewriters**MADE IN  
GREAT BRITAIN

Imperial Typewriter Co. Ltd., Leicester

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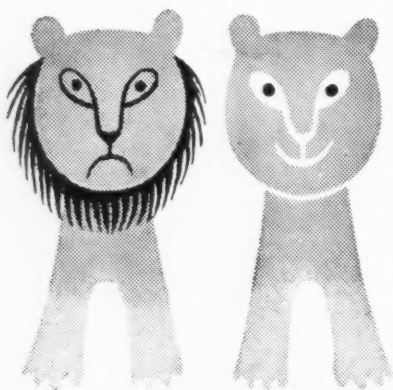


THE CUP OF GOODNESS -



**OXO** WORKS WONDERS!

So good to drink,  
so easy to make



Good mornings  
begin with  
**Gillette**



... the sharpest edge in the world!

Walk with  
**Liberty**



When you buy Liberty shoes you obtain quality in design, material and workmanship. That is the reason for the combination of smartness with perfect comfort in every shoe. Liberty have never compromised on quality. The name of "Liberty" guarantees the highest quality in every detail.

**LIBERTY SHOES LTD., LEICESTER**



Made by **ABDULLA** for those  
who prefer the American style of blend

## For Restorative Sleep



### There is only One Ovaltine

**D**EEP, restorative sleep is essential if you are to wake up rested and invigorated in the morning. Because 'Ovaltine' helps to ensure this kind of sleep it is recognised throughout the world as the ideal night-cap.

Taken at bedtime, 'Ovaltine' acts in an entirely natural way. It helps to break down nervous tensions built up during the day—induces natural relaxation and prepares the way for peaceful sleep.

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Delicious 'Ovaltine' is prepared from Nature's best foods, and exceptional steps are taken to ensure the highest standards of purity and nutritive value. The 'Ovaltine' Dairy and Egg Farms, extending to some 1,000 acres, and the 'Ovaltine' Research Laboratories, were specially established in the interests of 'Ovaltine' quality.

**Quality**  
has made Ovaltine  
the World's most widely used  
Food Beverage

P716A

## Accent on Ankles

How momentous have become

those six or eight inches of

stocking, they can age the 'new

look' or they can arouse ad-

miration. They will certainly

give you added pleasure if

they are "Tudorose" — the

loveliest of lovely sheer hose.



# TUDOROSE

FULLY FASHIONED STOCKINGS

*in pure silk, rayon and nylon.*

## Repeat Performance In Couture Collections

### Spotted Tie Silk

of pure silk in subtle shades  
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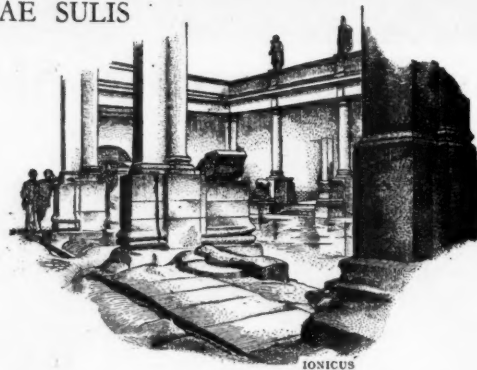
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GREETINGS LETTER TELEGRAM  
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## AQUAE SULIS



IONICUS

**B**BATH, called by the Romans Aquae Sulis, was founded over 800 years before the Roman Invasion. Partly because of the properties of its famous waters and partly on account of the amenities of its climate and situation, the city became a fashionable resort in the Regency period and retains its popularity to the present day.

Martins Bank, at 42 Milsom Street, Bath, forms part of a network of nearly 600 branches covering the greater part of the country, and provides up-to-date banking services and finance for every kind of business.



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LIMITED

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Blessings  
over a . . .

Est. 1715



**MARTELL**  
*Cognac*  
**BRANDY**

**THREE STAR**

**CORDON BLEU**





THE WORD is rarely heard today, but was often called in London taverns in the past. Nipitato was the name of one of the strong beers produced when brewing ingredients had not to be carefully rationed, as they are today.

FUNDAMENTALLY, beer has not changed in five hundred years, for malt and hops are still the basic materials. And after a thousand years the spirit in which innkeeping at its best is conducted, the spirit of hospitality, is also unchanged.

INNKEEPING begins with inn building. Fifty years ago, brewers set out to improve public houses. Their effort grew in strength between the wars and at its peak, during the 'thirties, they were spending about £5,000,000 annually on building and replacement. The new houses were not all in impeccable taste but they are in sum a substantial proof of hospitable endeavour, and many are admirable — the finest houses of their kind in the world.

BREWERS wish and intend to resume this effort as soon as conditions permit. The licensed houses of the future will not necessarily be large but their purpose will be the traditional purpose of our inns : to provide means of recreation in many different forms (food and drink, games and, where possible, music, plays and other cultural activities) and to serve as social centres as stimulating or as quiet and comfortable as the company themselves desire.

NIPITATO may not be found in the new inns, but the welcome and service of which it was in its own time a manifestation will be given in new and finer forms.

*Issued by the Brewers' Society*



## That Cow & Gate Look

In choosing the right food mothers bestow what should be the birth-right of every baby — an insurance policy to good health. The right food for YOUR baby is the best that money can buy — COW & GATE. Where a young baby's life is concerned, surely it must be false economy to buy anything but the best?

Better be sure now than possibly sorry in years to come; insist therefore on giving your child the best possible start in life — a fine healthy constitution.

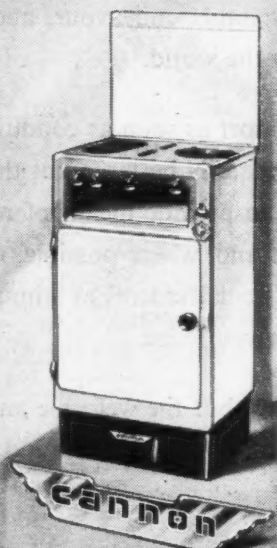
Buy COW & GATE to-day and be proud of that "COW & GATE LOOK."



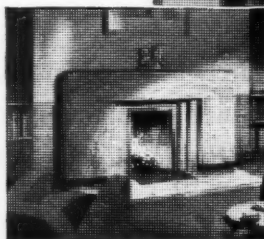
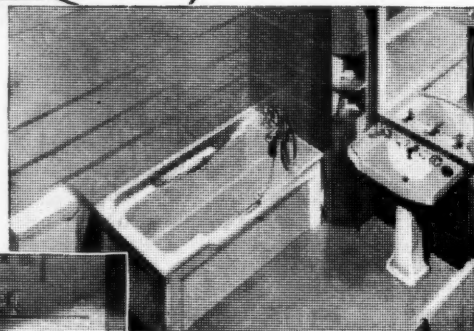
# COW & GATE MILK FOOD

*The FOOD of ROYAL BABIES*

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If you cannot call, please send for fully illustrated brochure to Dept. P.1.

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(Established 1850)

BRUNSWICK WORKS, HAMMERSMITH, LONDON  
Showroom Entrance: 64 King St., W.6. Telephone: RIVerside 4101 (24 lines)



THE MOST TREASURED NAME IN PERFUME...

# CHANEL



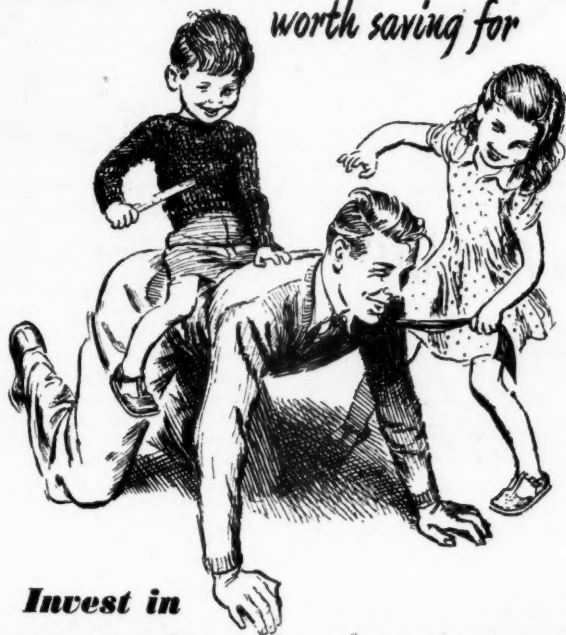
SPONTEX sponges are wonderfully soft, absorbent and resilient . . . stay fresh and save soap. They have a long life and may be cleaned by boiling. SPONTEX Sponges contain no rubber—ask for them by name.

NOW IN FOUR  
DELIGHTFUL COLOURS **2'9** AND **3'8**



MADE IN G.T. BRITAIN BY SPONCEL LTD.

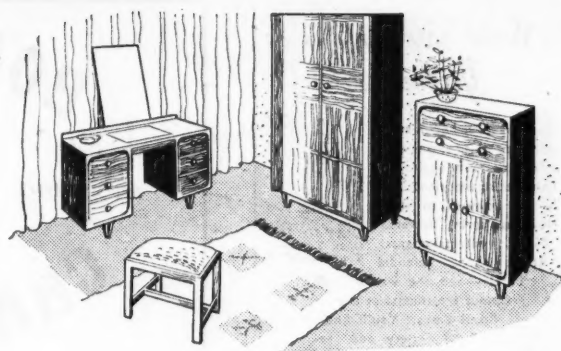
*Everyone has someone  
worth saving for*



**Invest in  
NATIONAL SAVINGS**

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Issued by the National Savings Committee



## A NEW BEDROOM SUITE

*designed by Christopher Heal, M.S.I.A.*

Three pieces—wardrobe, dressing table and cupboard chest—in Australian walnut (*Purchase tax free*) . £70.6.9

(Also in waxed polished mahogany, weathered oak, or in stained oak with unstained contrasting panels of natural oak . . . . . £69.9.3)

Dressing stool, covered in tapestry . . . £6.9.3

*This example is taken from the large selection of well designed modern furniture to be seen at*

## HEAL & SON

HEAL & SON LTD. 196 TOTTENHAM COURT ROAD, W.1

STORY WITH A MORAL

No. 2



It can be said that the melting pot of the animal and vegetable kingdoms is the simmering soup tureen. Here friend and foe alike meet a common and anonymous end. Viewed separately, each ingredient of this salubrious repast presents so noble an aspect that it deserves no less than the best treatment before the fatal day. Where else, indeed, than inside a

nice, cool Frigidaire where the temperature stays put regardless of the weather?

MORAL: Look for the sign of a Frigidaire installation next time you buy fish, fowl, fruit, meat, vegetables, milk or other perishable foods. Refrigeration at its finest keeps food at its freshest. SOON the day will come when everyone can have a Frigidaire for domestic use. In the meantime, shop where food is Frigidaire-fresh!



You're twice as sure with  
two great names

**FRIGIDAIRE**

A BRITISH PRODUCT

Made only by GENERAL MOTORS



## How lively... Yet how restful

Step up your health at  
Harrogate this Spring—  
before the rush begins!

Exhilarating moorland air  
—and myriads of the  
loveliest spring flowers.  
Music, entertainments,  
smart shops, splendid



MAY 11—14  
Open Tennis  
Tournament.

hotels—and the world-  
famous treatments at the  
Royal Baths. You'll find  
both gaiety and re-  
laxation for your holiday  
at Harrogate.



JULY 4—9  
Festival of  
Music. The  
Halle Orchestra,  
Barbierli.

Write NOW for new illus-  
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Baxter, Information Bureau,  
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FOR EARLY HOLIDAYS

TRAVEL BY RAIL.  
Details from Stations,  
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Through Pullman ser-  
vices from London,  
Newcastle, Edinburgh &  
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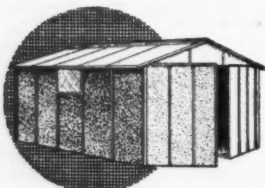
**Clive Bond**

*The Notepaper*



*Quality and Distinction*

CLIVE HUGHES & Co. Ltd., 17 Fleet Street, E.C.4



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Fireproof garages; easily erected.  
Various designs, range of sizes. Write  
call or phone for full particulars.

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Box 109D, Brampton Rd., Bexleyheath, Kent  
Tel.: Bexleyheath 505

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BY APPOINTMENT TO THE LATE KING GEORGE V.



# CHAMPAGNE

"SPECIAL CUVÉE" RECOMMENDED

*Henry Cotton*

himself  
designed and recommends


# LOTUS



Made for those who prefer rubber soles,  
Lotus Edgegrip have a corrugated  
bevel-edge so that they hold firm even  
when, at the end of the stroke, the  
foot is turned on to the inner edge.

## Edgegrip Shoes for Golf

# Studington



# for Travel Coats

STUDD & MILLINGTON LTD., 67 CHANCERY LANE, W.C.2, and SAVILE ROW

**F**OR  
**S**ERVICE  
**W**ITHOUT  
**A**  
**F**AULT  
**S**LAZINGER

ASK YOUR SPORTS DEALER



SHERRIES from the famous  
BRISTOL CELLARS

Harveys of Bristol hope soon to  
advertise their famous "Bristol  
Milk" and "Bristol Cream" again.  
Meanwhile they have excellent  
Sherries for everyday use at the  
controlled price of 20/-. Six are  
listed below, and you may care to  
order an assorted case. Any charge  
made for packages will be allowed  
for on their return. Carriage on  
three or more bottles is free.

MANCHITA, medium dry	20/-
MERENDA, pale dry	20/-
FINO, light pale dry	20/-
ANITA, light brown	20/-
CLUB AMONTILLADO	20/-
PALE DRY, Sherry	20/-

**John HARVEY**  
& SONS LTD. Founded in 1796.  
5 Pipe Lane, Colston Street, Bristol, 1  
London Office: 40 King Street, St James's, S.W.1



*Fine tailored shirts . . .*

Our Man's Shop is celebrating its removal to larger rooms just inside the Regent Street entrance with a lordly offer of tailored shirts. In the finest striped poplin, collar-attached or with two separate collars, or wool cashmere, with collar attached only. Coat sleeves, pullover or coat style

**Liberty**  
*of Regent Street*



**BEST MAN WINS**

"I'm a best man again tomorrow, Hawkins."

"Mr. Edward's nuptials I understand, Sir! I once had to confiscate his catapult. Tempus . . ."

"Marches on Hawkins. Are we fully prepared?"

"Completely, Sir! Our tall hat is ironed, the carnation in the refrigerator and a glass of

*Rose's Lime Juice will be ready against your return from the — er — stag-party.*

"Farsighted butling, Hawkins. I must give Mr. Edward full support tomorrow."

"The Rose's will ensure that, Sir. And may I suggest you mention it to Mr. Edward. I bear him no ill will over the catapult."

**ROSE'S**—for Gin and Lime

**FOR ALL DAY SMARTNESS**

**Well  
groomed men  
tie up  
to**

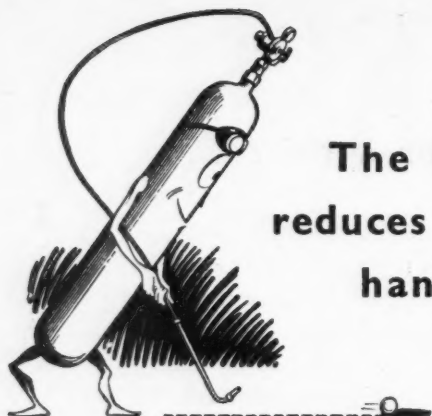


**"Trubenised"**  
REGISTERED TRADE MARK  
**BRAND COLLARS**

A "Trubenised" brand collar gives all the comfort of a soft collar yet retains its morning crispness to the end of the busiest day—

The Registered Trade Mark "Trubenised" distinguishes a brand of fused semi-stiff wearing apparel made and processed under agreement with the proprietors—

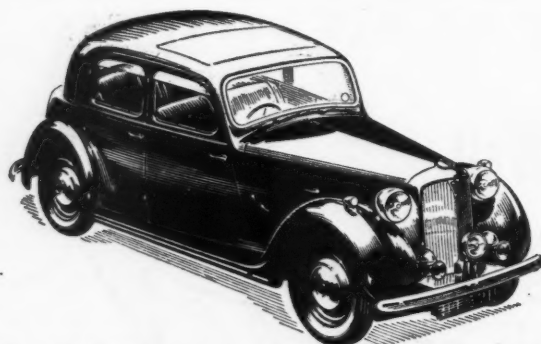
**TRUBENISED LTD • 17/18 OLD BOND ST • LONDON • W1**



## The BOC reduces your handicap

The 38-ton cast-iron driving pulley of an old fashioned steam engine was due to be scrapped. The pulley measured 16 ft. across and the hole through which it had to go to the scrap heap was less than 5 ft. wide. A tricky problem—solved by a B.O.C. process. Oxygen cutting did in four days, a job which had been estimated at six weeks by other methods. Throughout industry today processes such as this are in everyday use—playing a vital part in Britain's recovery.

**The British Oxygen Co Ltd**  
London and Branches



### The ROVER "Sixty" and "Seventy-five"

ONE of Britain's fine cars now made finer. In the new programme the Rover Company concentrate a number of important mechanical advances in a simplified range of high quality models, including completely new design engine and chassis, and independent front wheel suspension. Two engine sizes are available, 4-cylinder or 6-cylinder, and two types of saloon bodies incorporating many detail improvements.

THE 'SIXTY.'  
(4-cyl.) 4 or 6-light saloon

Retail Price	Purchase Tax	Total
£845:0:0	£235:9:6	£1080:9:6

THE 'SEVENTY-FIVE.'  
(6-cyl.) 4 or 6-light saloon

Retail Price	Purchase Tax	Total
£865:0:0	£241:0:7	£1106:0:7

# ROVER

*One of Britain's Fine Cars*

THE ROVER COMPANY LTD., SOLIHULL, BIRMINGHAM AND DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, LONDON  
CVS-94



## BY ROYAL COMMAND

'Take a shop,' said the Prince, and Mr. Marcovitch, who, a hundred years ago, was making his cigarettes in an obscure room near Piccadilly, knew that their excellence had made him famous. Ever since, Marcovitch Cigarettes have been made to the same high standards as won the approval of that Eminent Personage and his friends; they are rolled of the very finest tobacco, for the pleasure of those whose palates appreciate perfection.



*Marcovitch*  
**BLACK AND WHITE**  
*cigarettes for Virginia smokers*

25 for 5/3

Also **BLACK AND WHITE**  
**SMOKING MIXTURE**  
2 oz. tin 9/5

ISSUED BY GODFREY PHILLIPS LTD



## Choosing the Ring

THE HAPPINESS OF  
CHOOSING AN ENGAGEMENT  
RING IS EXPERIENCED TO  
THE FULL AT MAPPIN AND  
WEBB'S SHOWROOMS, WHERE  
UNHURRIED CHOICE CAN BE  
MADE FROM A UNIQUE  
SELECTION OF LOVELY RINGS  
WITH TRUSTWORTHY  
ADVICE ALWAYS AT HAND.



DIAMONDS, EMERALDS, SAPPHIRES  
*of world-famed Mappin quality*

## MAPPIN AND WEBB

LONDON SHOWROOMS: LIMITED  
156-162 OXFORD ST., W.1 2 QUEEN VICTORIA ST., E.C.4 172 REGENT ST., W.1  
SHEFFIELD: SHOWROOMS, NORFOLK ST.  
PARIS BIARRITZ BUENOS AIRES RIO DE JANEIRO JOHANNESBURG BOMBAY

## MOUNTAINS OF FRANCE



Five contrasting ranges, starred with resorts  
and health-giving spas, lakes and rivers, ensure  
the finest holidays all the year round.

For further details apply to any Travel Agent or  
to French National Tourist Office, 179 Piccadilly,  
London, W.1.

## *New-beautifully efficient*

### COMBINED ELECTRIC KETTLE HOT-WATER JUG



#### THE H.M.V. MADDOX KETTLE-JUG

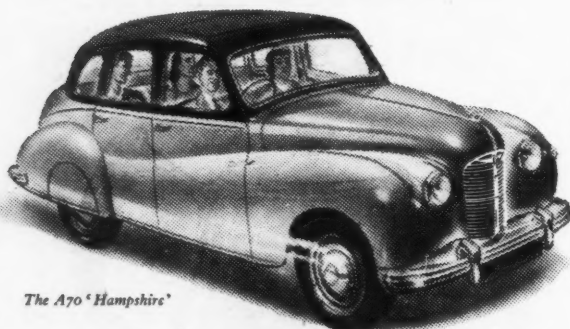
Specially designed to look perfectly in place among silver and china of any afternoon tea table. Its sleek, streamlined body is brilliant chromium-plate on copper (electro-tinned inside). Heat-resisting handle ensures comfortable pouring. Insulated feet and non-drip spout prevent damage to polished surfaces. Safety device breaks current supply if kettle boils dry. Boils 3 pints in approximately 10 minutes. Voltage ranges 200-220 Volts, 230-250 Volts DC or AC supply.



Obtainable from most leading Electrical Retailers. In the event of difficulty, write to The Gramophone Co. Ltd. (Household Appliance Division), Hayes, Middx.

NAME.....  
ADDRESS.....  
.....

You see more Austins on the roads of Britain today than any other single make of car



The A70 'Hampshire'

AND here is one of the reasons why . . . a Kent owner has this to say of his 15-year-old Austin:—

"I drive a 1934 Austin 'York' 18 on taxi work, which, as you know, doesn't lead to the kindest of treatment always. Up to date she has completed 495,651 miles . . . her average mileage per week is 1,000 to 1,300 . . ."

Quite a performance. And the new Austins, including the A70 'Hampshire' will do just as well; they are built in the same way — built to last.

**AUSTINS LAST LONGER**  
— you can depend on it!

THE AUSTIN MOTOR CO LTD • LONGBRIDGE • BIRMINGHAM



*The  
simple  
life*

'A pouch stuffed in my pocket, a pipe stuck in my mouth,' said the Vicar, 'and my simple wants are met. But the tobacco must be Three Nuns. There I am adamant. If you tell me that other tobaccos are cheaper, I can prove to you that Three Nuns smokes so slowly, lasts so long, that it soon compensates for those extra coppers.'

**Three Nuns**

STEPHEN MITCHELL & SON,  
BRANCH OF THE IMPERIAL TOBACCO CO. (OF GREAT BRITAIN & IRELAND), LIMITED, GLASGOW

By Appointment  
Motor Mower Manufacturers  
Charles H. Pugh Ltd.

**ATCO  
MOTOR MOWERS  
SERVICE**

If your Atco needs attention before mowing starts, please contact your Atco Depot Manager soon, so that the Depot can put your Atco right in good time.

**CHARLES H. PUGH LTD.,**  
Whitworth Works,  
Birmingham, 9

*I'm cut out for success, sir*  
I'm smart — a full brogue in fine grain leather, black or brown, with bold punching and extended heel seat. I'm extra well-made — there's a lot of hard wear in my double leather sole and strong welt. I'm good for years of untiring service — like all the shoes in the K clan 61/9

NO PURCHASE TAX.



*today's shoes-  
K shoes*



# PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXVI No. 5652

April 6, 1949

## Charivaria

A TWO-TON whale was washed up on a Norfolk beach. We understand that a Food Ministry official arrived and immediately put it on points.

When a man accused of espionage in a Czechoslovakian court was discharged there was booing from the spectators. It is thought that they suspected fair play.

A man charged with robbery with violence was said to have given trouble from his earliest days. He cracked his first crib as a baby.



"Miners deserve to rise in the world: I see no reason why they shouldn't join the Board," says a trade unionist. From pit to dress circle in one step?

### Short Story

"Lady's Jodhpurs for Sale, waist 28. Wanted, Wedding Veil."—*Advt. in "Mid-Sussex Times."*

"Before spring-cleaning the ceiling," says a household tip, "place a large Cellophane bag over your head." It should have convenient holes for the arms.

A traveller mentions attending a Central African mystery mime where sections of the audience rose at intervals muttering strange incantations. Late arrivals are a nuisance all over the world.

Increased supplies of French and Italian olive oil are reaching the shops. There should be no difficulty about salad dressing this summer—taking into account the fact that Food Ministry stocks of Algerian wine are said to be maturing so nicely.

### Not a Bite All Day

"Left on rocks opposite rock island in Hunyani River, on Sunday, 6th inst., small black tin box containing fishing tackle and bottom plate of dentures."—*Advt. in "The Rhodesia Herald."*

"To sneeze five times in rapid succession is a sign that someone is coming to see you," asserts a superstitious reader. It may even turn out to be a doctor.

### Homeopathy

"Hundreds of tons of basic sag are being used by British Railways to strengthen part of the railway embankment . . ." *Liverpool paper.*

Trees are budding so early and profusely this year that gardeners are expecting a record crop of leaves to be swept up in the autumn.

There is a growing feeling that peace will be preserved. After all, think how little of it we're using.

"To fight with one's neighbours all the time is hardly cricket," complains a politician. It's ice hockey.





## Who Will Control London's Explosives?

THE literature that has been so unstintingly delivered at this address to help me to make up my mind about the L.C.C. Election on April 7th is not in all respects satisfactory. None of the pamphlets that have been pushed through the letter-box, slipped under the door or (in one case) handed to me by a well-dressed man in a bowler-hat while I was smacking earth down with a spade in my front garden, tells me what I want to know.

Housing, Health and Education—these are important enough subjects in all conscience. I have read with interest of the splendid record of each party in these respects, as also of the misrule, incompetence, rapacity, spite, brutality and humbug that have marked their respective tenures of power. I am told, in figures that make the mind reel, of the millions of houses and flats, the schools and playgrounds, the clinics and the crèches that the elected representatives of either side have constructed to the greater glory of our ancient city. Sleeping, as I see it, neither by night nor day, snatching a frugal sandwich at their desks as opportunity served, these councillors have spent themselves in a task for which vision, courage and determination are the imperative prerequisites. It is a shock, on taking up another pamphlet or two, to discover the draughts and discomfort, the squalor and misery that each of these indefatigable parties has left in its wake.

It is clear, of course, that I am expected to compare the two records and decide which is the better. But, to be frank, I lack the necessary knowledge and the time to repair that deficiency. I do not know all the factors. I cannot weigh the erection of a hundred flats against the clearance of an acre of slums. I do not know what is represented, in terms of vision and courage, or even money, by the building of a sanatorium on the one hand and the award of fifty technical scholarships on the other. I cannot estimate, with any worth-while accuracy, the effect of slumps and wars on the optimum provision of open spaces for Londoners. I do not know what was the availability of timber and skilled joiners, let alone teachers of geography and the applied sciences, in 1930 and 1946. I ought to know these things, but I don't.

Speaking strictly for myself and very much in the mood to sign myself Ratepayer, I would rather not hear anything about the past achievements of the two L.C.C. parties. I do not want to vote for a party at all in this matter. I cannot see that the government of my great city, or county rather, has anything to do with politics. When I look, as I am doing at this moment, at the list of Powers and Duties of the L.C.C.—

*Civic restaurants; sanctioning of loans required by the metropolitan boroughs; acquisition and maintenance of parks and open spaces; the naming of streets and numbering of houses; the appointment of district surveyors; controlling the storage of explosive substances; infant life protection; gas, gas-meter and electricity-meter testing; the granting of licences for music, dancing, boxing and wrestling; historic buildings and monuments; registration of massage establishments; registration of motor-cars, etc.*

—I feel a strong conviction that I want neither a Socialist nor a Conservative to handle these matters for me; I want a good all-round man. It is a matter of complete indifference to me whether the man who numbers my house believes in Marx or Mosley; but he must be able to count.

The candidate I will vote for with confidence must possess qualifications, not merely a party ticket. First, he must have a thorough knowledge of the fabulous city I propose to entrust to him. He must be soaked in its atmosphere, its history, its traditions. I want all candidates to write me an essay on the origins and growth of London, with special reference to the course of the Roman wall and the extent of trade with Gaul, the significance of the portreeve in pre-Norman times and the boon bestowed upon the city by Sir Hugh Myddleton in 1620; they should also draw a sketch map of the boundaries of Westminster and the City in the reign of Henry VII. Second, he must have a wide knowledge of finance and the building trade, he must be able to control explosive substances, when stored, to distinguish readily between wrestling and massage establishments and make out licences for them in moderation, and he must be prepared at all times to protect infant life, even at the risk of inconvenience and delay to district surveyors awaiting appointment. It goes without saying that he must produce evidence, both in writing and by practical demonstration, of his ability to test gas and the meters used for the measurement of both gas and electricity. Electricity itself he need not test, since its presence or absence is readily determinable by the ordinary and more expendable citizen.

He must also have courage, vision and determination, but his possession of these qualities must be decided by myself at a personal interview, not merely claimed by him on a piece of paper handed to me when I am smacking earth down with a spade in my front garden. And he has two days at the outside to convince me that he is the man for my money.

Of which, heaven knows, he will take plenty.

H. F. E.

## The Rape of the Locks

"Lewisham barbers are to give certificates to babies having their first haircut. The certificate is headed 'To commemorate the first haircut,' and says: 'This is to certify that [name] has graduated from babyhood, having received his first haircut on this day.' Accompanying the certificate is a small envelope which will contain a lock of hair from the first haircut."—(incredibly) "The Times."

**B**UT lo! by brave *Advertisement* beguill'd,  
The anxious Mother leads her growing  
Child:

With slow approach they seek the envied  
Goal,

The mirror'd Room beneath the chequer'd Pole.  
The Priest of Foam and sacrificial Hair  
Invested stands beside the fatal Chair;  
Struck by the awful sight the Infant cries,  
And childish shrieks invoke the brazen Skies.  
*Quiet* at length and tardy *Silence* reign  
Unquestion'd Monarchs of that cool Domain.

The busy Forfex o'er the hairy Crown  
Snips at a Curl, and casts a Ringlet down;  
That Labour done, to dry her foolish Tears,  
He straightway lays aside th' abhorred Shears;  
O'er candid Parchment drives the ready Quill,  
Subscribes his Name, and then presents the Bill.  
One sever'd Lock, enclos'd, she bears away,  
The sweet Reminder of the fateful Day,  
Yet half in Doubt surveys the tonsur'd Pate,  
And marvels at the little Graduate.  
Infant no more, with her he homeward wends,  
Where *Lewisham* in dismal *Catford* ends.



AN OASIS OR A MIRAGE?

"Excuse me—may I have a look at your paper?"



*"And in my new sketch I play a ludicrous theatrical agent trying to engage talent."*

## Our Play Centre

(Supported entirely by Voluntary Contributions and Government Grants.)

**W**HEN our Resident Investigating Psychologist heard that the House Committee had agreed to the laying of a parquet floor, and that the Ministry had agreed to lay it, she said she was so pleased because she did want to observe how the children would react, especially the little ones. The big ones, she said, were not important because they had seen parquet flooring before and would, without guidance, play hop-scotch along the herring-bone pattern.

When it was laid she said she was dreadfully disappointed in the little ones, who did not seem at all impressed, but the reactions of the big ones were most interesting.

For example, look, she said, at Willie Brown who squatted there in the corner intent on the task of scraping round and round the edge of one block

with a ha'penny. That was most important, said our R. (I.) P., for the block had become a coffin symbol and it was to be overcome by the ha'penny which, being the eternal circle, was a life symbol. She said no one was to stop him, because he was resolving a complex and not only was it good for him, it was also frightfully interesting.

When Willie Brown had succeeded, by the aid of the life symbol (which, our R. (I.) P. informed us, was also the Sun-disc), in extracting the tar (Pluto) from the edges of the coffin symbol, he bore the latter off in triumph (under his coat) and our R. (I.) P. said it was most important to discover what he did with it, because his reaction to the released symbol would almost certainly be symbolic, and of course more than ordinarily interesting.

When four more boys in Willie Brown's age-group, by the aid of chisels, crowbars, levers, hammers and other symbols, removed each of them a further coffin symbol starting at the one-block pit provided by the resolution of Willie Brown's complex, our R. (I.) P. said it was thrillingly interesting because it demonstrated beyond dispute the fact that complexes were contagious, particularly in the transference period, and, she said, it was terribly important to discover what the boys did with the coffin symbols.

When the House Steward stumbled over the five-block pit provided by Willie and his contagees she said something about "dratted boys," and our R. (I.) P., in the awe-inspiring heavy silence of her consulting-room, where the impressive interview with the



recalcitrant House Steward was conducted, said don't interfere, because complexes were in process of being resolved, and it was most interesting, and dangerous if inhibited, and the transference period was particularly important.

When the cleaners had induced a sufficient quantity of water to seep beneath the coffin symbols that surrounded the pit a large area of flooring became rocky beneath the feet. When they had swept enough dust down the cracks between the blocks to keep corners and edges permanently raised, two of the little ones came into collision (on the physical plane) with enough force to necessitate stitches in their foreheads and to bring their respective mothers up to see "the lidy."

When they had been induced to leave the premises quietly our R. (I.) P., who happened to be the lidy whom they saw, said she thought the loose blocks could be removed without any grave danger to Willie Brown and his confrères, whose complexes were doing well but not quite well enough (as yet) to reveal the ultimate destiny of the filched coffin symbols.

When the warden stepped into the lake that the cleaners had left in the pit produced by the removal of about fifty coffin symbols she said she'd have to put the question of repairs before the House Committee with a view to an approach being made to the Ministry, but our R. (I.) P. said no, because the little ones were now regularly entering into unguided playing at paddling in the pit whether it was wet or dry, and it was most interesting because it symbolized the waters of Lethe and was indicative of pre-natal trauma.

When four boys under the captaincy of Willie Brown (making five in all, but that was nothing to do with the policeman's description of them as "a tough handful") had achieved fame through photographs and big headlines in the National Press, by falling in a heap and stopping the traffic on the (very) main road, the lady who lectured weekly (under the auspices of the other Ministry) on "Roads and Running About" displayed the home-made scooters that the police had confiscated from the four boys and their captain. These vehicles were cunningly constituted from flooring blocks mounted, with admirable skill, upon ex-Government ball-bearings. The lady who lectured explained very simply and with great patience that such contrivances were veritable death-traps, and our R. (I.) P., over a cup of tea afterwards, told her it was most

interesting, because the death-traps were coffin symbols mounted on life symbols.

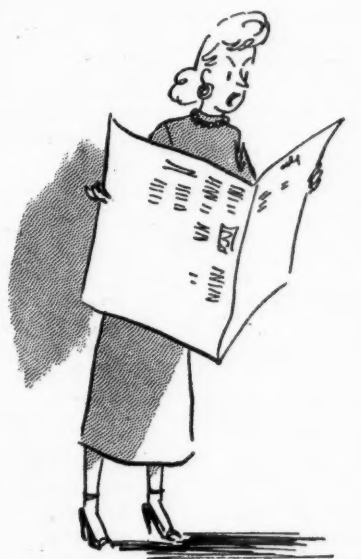
When the warden tripped up and sprained her ankle she said she really must see the House Committee about the Ministry about repairs, but our R. (I.) P. said no, because she had arranged a lecture to be delivered by herself to a group of visiting Resident Investigating Psychologists, and the pit must remain in order to demonstrate.

When the stoker was told by the warden to do something to make the edges of the pit safe for walking over he said it was not his work.

When he was told again he said "Lor' lumme," and took a coke shovel and several sacks upstairs with him.

When by means of the shovel he had removed all the floor-blocks from wall to wall, and with the aid of the sacks transferred them to his firewood pile, our R. (I.) P. handed in her resignation, giving as a reason "frustration and non-co-operation in experimental efforts."

When this was accepted by the other committee, the warden approached the House Committee in order to get a resolution adopted in order to approach the Ministry in order to have a new parquetry floor laid.



Hollowood

"It says nothing whatever about income tax being abolished. D'you think Miss Harper could have been joking?"

## My Nurserymaid

Oh, bring me back my nurserymaid!

I want my little nurserymaid  
To do the kindly things she used to do

And comfort me when I am made afraid

By thunderstorms or tigers at the Zoo.

I long to hide and seek her in the hay  
And dance with her among the fairy rings

And have her with me at St. Someone's Bay

For pointing out the porpoises and things.

Oh, bring me back my nurserymaid!

My simple, dimpled nurserymaid,

To help me get my hooks into my eyes

And when the last grim lap of Ludo's played,

To tuck me up and sing me lullabies.

Oh, bring her back for long enchanting walks

And lovely swings beneath the weeping beech

And picking great fat blackberries from stalks

That are a sight too high for me to reach.

Oh, bring me back my nurserymaid!

My cosy, rosy nurserymaid,

To make me wear my mittens when it's cold

And grab my bunch of snowdrops in the glade

When it has got too thick for me to hold.

I want her here to tell me what to weed

And when to go and water my shallot

And to consign me lumps of dough to knead

And turn into my private loaves (or not).

Oh, bring me back my nurserymaid!

My tiny, shiny nurserymaid.

She'd be a little greyer I'll agree;  
She'd be less nimble and a shade more staid

But still the simple thing she used to be.

She'd still wrap Castle pudding round a pill,

She'd still knit midget mufflers for a toy,

She'd be the same sweet Angelina still

If only they could find her little boy.

## Amos Revisited

VII

WHEN somebody remarked that it was a very long time since we had seen a certain well-known writer of detective-stories, Amos said "Oh, surely you know what happened to him? Why, it was in the papers."

We said we hadn't noticed it. Amos leaned forward and said very solemnly "*The mantle of Edgar Wallace fell on him.* Naturally, he's been out of sight ever since."

Amos said he would like to know who gave the B.B.C. the idea that he liked to take a lordly æsthetic view of the weather.

In the ensuing silence we gave each other cautious glances until at last the little man with the pointed ears, whose name I always forget, put his glass down with a thump on the table and said "Look, Amos. We've had a hard day. Come right out with it—*what do you mean?*"

"I mean," Amos said, assuming the air that means (we believe) he thinks he is looking humorously unruffled, "the way the weather forecast always begins. What do we all want, what does *anybody* listen for, in the weather forecast?"

Somebody, mistakenly believing he could short-circuit the whole affair, replied "You're wrong, you know. It isn't just one's own area one listens for. What about the people who are in one area but are about to travel into another?"

"Phoo!" said Amos sharply. "Don't be so damn clever. I don't mean all that stuff about separate areas, that's just what I *do* approve of. What I refer to is the—the—the conspectus they give you at the beginning, which, as far as I can see, is no good to man or beast. Who—tell me, *who* wants to survey the whole British Isles and be told the whole story? Who wants to know that a complex wedge of something or other is trundling slowly in a particular direction and may reach his own area by afternoon, when twenty seconds later he's going to be told exactly what effect it will have when it does reach his own area? Do you mean to tell me there are a lot of people sitting about with maps and protractors, who want to be supplied with all the data so that they can work out their own forecast and see whether the met. people have got it right? And if there aren't, what are the people who do listen supposed to be doing? Is there anything at all in it for them except a little picture of the British Isles with a lot of bits of weather sliding about on it—a purely æsthetic experience?"

"Why, Amos," said his neighbour, daringly, "if it is a purely æsthetic experience, I should have thought you were just the kind of listener with the mental resources to appreciate it."

Luckily he chose to be flattered by this. He smirked and said "Oh, well," and we got out of the subject without bloodshed.

"Odd that the person who says he would be the *last* to say something or other," said Amos, avoiding the eye of a character who had a minute or two before used this very phrase, "is so often, by definition, the first."

After a pause, he stroked his nose and added with a modest air "Though I should be the last to suggest—"

It amuses him sometimes to advance a bit of proverbial philosophy so serpentine, so intricately mangled, that it

will keep the rest of us quiet for some minutes while he is away buying a drink or a paper. Of this kind was the convoluted observation he produced the other night: "Of course one never comes to all the bridges one has crossed. But whenever I come to one of mine, I usually find I've been burning it. At both ends."

When he returned and looked brightly about to see what we had made of this we frankly admitted that we hadn't been able to extract any meaning from it at all.

"Oh, good," he said. "I'm glad I'm not the only one."

Perhaps Amos was suffering from indigestion himself—anyway, he had sat very gloomily silent for a good long time, his hands wrapped round his drink as if he were steering some large, preferably lethal vehicle—when he began to talk about the effect on popular fiction of what he called the spread of simple medical information.

"In stories written thirty or forty years ago," he said, "moody and splenetic men who to-day would be thought to show all the symptoms of incipient or even acute internal trouble, incurable without operation or long rest on a milk diet, became permanently cheerful and content after a week or two of brisk exercise and rich food in the country—or even, sometimes, after an exhausting run to the end of the street."

We all reflected sadly for a time about the good old days. I dare say several of us were wondering how to put the obvious question, but only a man who was about to leave had the effrontery to state it simply: "That's all very well, Amos," he said, edging towards the door, "but have you ever *tried* either of those devices?"

I don't think he even heard this. Or, perhaps he didn't feel up to it.

"As for me," he said shortly afterwards, when deeds of heroism were under discussion, "I propose to die in my bed, like a vindictive oyster."

R. M.

## April, North Country

SPRING returns always later to the North than to the South, and we are jealous, we fret telling ourselves: "She kisses full on the mouth as the sun does the Southlands."

And yet, and yet, what joy have they to find a primrosed bank, a Devon combe, a field in Gloucester set as a carpet random-stitched from edge to edge with lazy-daisy embroidery of daisies compared to our joy when we find a violet hardier than Downland harebells under a Northern hedge?

R. C. S.

## The Figment

**S**YMPSON has acquired a cat, a large yellow cat with green eyes. He acquired it the day after his annual old-school dinner. Had he not attended his annual old-school dinner it is extremely unlikely that he would have acquired a cat, because he does not like cats, especially yellow cats, but in this world one thing is apt to lead to another, and the annual old-school dinner led to a headache, and the headache led to the acquisition of the cat.

He became aware of the headache as soon as he opened his eyes on the morning after the event, and attributed it, as one does, to something he had eaten. Probably the fish. He could not face a proper breakfast, and after toying idly with half a tin of tomato-juice sat down at his typewriter to begin his day's work. After making nine spelling mistakes in the first three lines of a quite simple letter about income tax he put the cover back on the typewriter and decided to go for a brisk walk in the country.

After two miles he began to feel much better, and then suddenly he saw the cat. It was sitting in the middle of the lane, and it looked up and stared at him in a peculiar way. Although not fond of cats Sympson was for many years a boy scout, and they have a law about being kind to animals, so when he reached the cat he bent down and stroked it on the back of the neck.

"Poor pussy," he said, "diddums-en-diddums."

Just the normal conversational opening gambit that any good-natured man would make to any cat, meeting it casually in a lane on a sunny morning. Most cats would have replied with a hiss or a purr, and that would have been the end of it. But this cat rose to his feet, arched his back, and then started to follow Sympson down the lane, keeping exactly six yards behind him. Sympson quickened his pace, but the cat did the same. Sympson broke into a trot, the cat did the same. After about a mile Sympson turned and looked angrily at the cat. Then he threw a lump of wood at it. He missed by a yard and decided that the best thing would be just to ignore the cat.

After another mile he came to a village, the cat still following. A blue lamp gave Sympson an idea, and he strode boldly into the police-station.

"I wish to report a lost cat," he said to the sergeant behind the desk, "a big yellow cat with a peculiar

expression that has been following me for miles."

The sergeant took Sympson's name and address and wrote down a careful description of the cat, and Sympson went outside to get the cat and give it to the policeman to return to its owners. But the cat had gone, and suddenly it occurred to Sympson that possibly it had not been a cat at all, but a figment of his imagination. Annual old-school dinners consisting almost entirely of bad fish were inclined to breed figments of the imagination. So he decided not to trouble the police any more, and leaped on a passing bus.

He lunched out, carefully avoiding fish, and then walked home, greatly relieved to see no more yellow cats.

He hummed cheerfully to himself as he turned his key in the front door of his flat, entered his study—then tottered to the bell and rang for the porter.

"Porter," he said tensely, when the man appeared, "am I right in thinking that a large yellow cat is curled up on the hearth-rug? Or is it merely a figment of my imagination?"

He waited anxiously for the porter's answer. If it were a real cat, he could not see how it could possibly have got there. If it were a figment, on the other hand, he felt that he would have to give up fish altogether.

"It is a real cat," said the porter. "The police brought it. They said it strolled into the police-station five minutes after you reported that you had lost it."

D. H. B.







*"Airmen only salute you if you're commissioned, otherwise all you're entitled to is the usual long, low whistle."*

## Money, Hand Over Fist

**W**E find making money exhilarating; but we also find it exhilarating to spend it," writes Mr. Edmund Wilson in his *Europe Without Baedeker*. "Money for us is a medium; a condition of life, like air. But with the English it means always property. A dollar is something that you multiply . . . It is a value that may be totally imaginary, yet can for a time provide half-realized dreams. But pounds, shillings and pence are tangible, solid, heavy . . ."

Whatever we may think of the English side of this interesting trans-Atlantic comparison, which is so

sweeping in its generalization that one might think it had been inspired by an excessive familiarity with the novels of Galsworthy, there can be no doubt that the American half provides exactly the right note of introduction to a study of the U.S. craze of "Pyramiding." Thank you, Mr. Wilson.

The Pyramid Club is merely one more manifestation of the get-rich-quick mania that afflicts America with cyclic certainty roughly every seven years. Nearly twenty-one years ago there was the great stock market gamble; fourteen years ago there was the fantastic chain-mail robbery; and

but for the war there would probably have been another nation-wide flutter in 1942.

In 1935 some person or persons unknown put into the post a sheaf of letters containing a list of names, invited each addressee to send a dime to the first name on the list, then to cross off that name, add his own name at the foot of the list and dispatch it to five new customers with an invitation to repeat the entire performance. This complicated manoeuvre set the chain-letter craze in motion. In next to no time, so keen and universal is the desire to get something for practically nothing, the United States post office was waist-deep in letters and sinking rapidly.

At first the national funds prospered from the phenomenal demand for postage stamps; stationery boomed, and literacy improved by loops and curls. But soon it became obvious that legitimate commerce was taking a rap. Business letters lay inert and useless in every post office under mountains of chain-letters. The wheels of industry whined slowly to a standstill. Tax demand-notes simply disappeared and bills were swept away by the tornado which accompanied the inundation. And then the whole thing fizzled out quite suddenly just as new postal regulations were being drafted to protect the nation from what would now be called un-American activities. Not, however, before the promoters of the scheme and the first batch of speculators had gathered in a handsome reward, and not before their millions of supporters had lost their millions of dimes. It was estimated at the time—and I am not one to question estimates of this order—that a person whose name managed to reach the top of the list, once the chain had been stretched to its maximum length, stood to win half a million dimes, or about £10,000. Theoretically there was no reason—other than an earthly one—why this bonus should not have reached every person in America, provided that the population could have expanded fast enough. Unfortunately, the people were too busy copying out their lists, addressing envelopes and looking for dimes to do much about it.

The Pyramid Club is another version of the chain-letter system. It sprang up a few weeks ago in Los Angeles, circled the city two or three times and then shot away towards the east, leaving a wide trail of havoc. This time the stationers are not doing so well, but manufacturers and dealers in doughnuts, pretzels and coffee who

cater for the nightly orgies of the Pyramid Clubs are reported to be doing such good business that speculation about the origins of the craze is bound to include them among the "possibles." The Pyramid Club gets its name from the well-known figure built on the principle of simple geometric progression from unity. At the base of each triangle stand the latest mugs or suckers each of whom has contributed a dollar (sometimes two) to the fund and must introduce two new members before he can move up one step of twelve on the way to the summit and the financial harvest. For the pioneers the chances of attaining the peak are reasonably good: it is possible for a pyramidier to collect as much as two thousand and forty-eight dollars after twelve days of unflagging pursuit of new recruits and doughnuts. But the late-comers must be extraordinary optimists and mathematicians even to imagine that they can emulate the feats of the leaders. To keep a Pyramid Club going for twenty-five days needs something like 16,777,216 players: for the tail-enders to have even half a chance of an innings the population of the whole world would have to be roped in.

Some of the complications that arise in a community visited by the craze are revealed in the following notes, for which I am indebted to an American friend who claims to be the sole surviving non-Pyramidier in Pittsburgh.

"District Attorney Rahausser said there is evidence that some clubs are being operated by shady promoters, many from out of town."

"The district attorney showed reporters Pyramid Club forms that had come into his possession. They bore names from Butler, Renfrew, Burton Heights and Coraopolis. This organization, he said, if opened in Allegheny County, is illegal as being against public policy and the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

"Postmaster J. C. Smith threatened to step in . . . pointed out that the penalty would be up to one thousand in fines and/or two years in jail."

"Pittsburg Safety Director George E. A. Fairley has predicted: 'Those pyramids will collapse under their own dead weight.'"

"For the average Pyramidier the odds are seventeen umptillions to one that he will never reach the pinnacle of fortune."

"Look at the way all those people are getting together now. If they didn't have something like this to stir them up they'd probably never have

met ninety per cent. of their new friends."

"Wacky or not, there's no doubt about the enthusiasm."

"It gives them something to talk about. And how they talk!"

"So it can't work, bud? So it's mathematically impossible, is it? Well, whattaya think these things are—soap coupons?"

Now it is tempting to let Mr. Edmund Wilson get away with his comparison, to concede him the chain-letter craze and the Pyramid Clubs as purely and peculiarly American, and to leave Britain apathetic, unexhilarated and property-ridden with its stodgy totalizators and football-pools which absorb only about £1,000 millions or one-tenth of the national income every year. It may be that we are incapable of trying to make money merely for the darn fun of it. And perhaps we'd put it all into some tumbledown bit of property if we ever won anything. But don't let Mr. Wilson suppose that we have always been incapable of a flutter. We've had our South Sea Bubbles and our George Hudsons. (George Hudson, sir, was our Railway King, a man who financed British railways by a sort of Pyramid Club which crashed exactly one hundred years ago. His method has since become familiar. He paid excellent dividends out of the proceeds of successive issues of new stock and only failed to survive because he couldn't get the population of investors to keep pace with his flotations.) In fact we've been through it all many, many times.

There is, of course, no real reason why the Pyramid Club idea shouldn't go well in Britain, except that we should soon run short of doughnuts. But need that stop us? Read through the above prospectus again carefully, and then send for my special list. To-day!

Hon.

### Invitation After the Storm

WHAT change one hour can bring!  
Come out and see narcissus bow again

Their innocent pale faces after rain  
And stare in purity at calm, pearled grass.

Listen, the wrenchings of your window cease,

And with a soft, enormous sound of peace,

The winds, unangered, through your tall trees pass,

The washed birds sing. F. C. C.





"I suppose this means more contentious bickering between learned counsel."

## Appreciation

ONE of the best-known kinds of appreciation is applause, or banging your hands together, and I do not think we can do better than start with a few words on the origin of this long-established social custom. In similar situations I have often asked my readers to think back to primitive man—not too scientifically, just someone wearing shaggy fur but no socks and sitting round a fire invented by accident—and I do not hesitate to ask them again. We may confidently assert that when primitive men were sung or danced to they found that banging their hands together was an easier way of expressing the feelings expected of them than a lot of individual murmurs in which the words meant less than the enthusiasm and would therefore sound ridiculous to the primitive men sitting near them. With the introduction of wooden floors—I have moved some little distance on in history—people found that the noise of clapping could be considerably augmented by other people stamping their feet, while, with the introduction of whistlers, whistling brought the potential effect to pandemonium level. Whistling audiences are an extremely modern side of life, or seem so to anyone thinking about them, but it must be remembered that in the old days audiences used to shout "Bravo!" as they do now when they want to show keenness without being tough, and "Huzza!" as they certainly do not now.

GOING back to clapping, the basic constituent of applause, I should like to note first that mankind has from time immemorial found that it looks more sophisticated

and does not have to aim so accurately if instead of hitting all of one hand flat against the other it sort of whams them diagonally and slightly bent up; but this apparent sophistication will be exposed for what it is when I remind my readers how often they find themselves looking imperceptibly sideways at the next pair of hands for a cue to the right degree of enthusiasm. The speed of the average hand-clapper varies a lot; from as fast as possible, to show that we are giving Art our full approval, to a marking-time which indicates that the person next to us is doing the same. Finally I must mention those blasé types who hit the back of one hand against the front of the other. They are not so much blasé as acting under a considered impulse, but they deserve recognition, as do the people at the opposite extreme, the ones who without letting up can slant sideways in that shared animation peculiar to applauders.

Still keeping to the subject of appreciation, but darting off into rather another side of it, we come to the place of appreciation in the business world, for it is a word much used in typed letters. It occurs either in the first paragraph which can nearly always be taken in a lump as a radiation of general goodwill, or about three-quarters of the way down the page, when to see the word "appreciate" from some lines off is frequently a warning that the business world wants us to pay it some money and is getting nasty, by which I mean still being awfully nice. It is thus a hard-working word which few shorthand-writers have any difficulty in reading back except in a hurry to someone who frightens them. Another rather businesslike aspect of appreciation might fittingly be brought into this paragraph, though nowadays it has quite a place in domestic life. I refer to the process, the opposite of depreciation, whereby things get more valuable instead of less as the years pass. It was always usual for Chippendale sideboards and first editions to cost more now than they would have then; but it takes an era like nowadays for people finding the price still painted on the bottom of an old dust-bin to think it worth while to go halfway down the garden to tell the others.

I NEED not remind my readers that appreciation is one of the props of social life; that after a party they would just possibly rather seize on and shower with thanks some second-cousin staying the night than go away feeling they had left behind them the slightest impression of ingratitude; and that for every ten visitors telling their hosts that their arm-chairs are more comfortable than theirs, social history records a negligible number saying the opposite. The opposite is, I admit, a little difficult to work out, but I am confident that my readers are sensible enough to get it right.

Having dealt rather hurriedly with social appreciation I want to move on to musical appreciation, which is one of the things my readers may have learnt at school; it is worth a few words because for many people it is of all subjects the most elusive in recalling the special benefits of, though it may rather compulsorily have inspired my readers to write a little one-fingered tune they can still sing. On a higher, later and voluntary level musical appreciation is of course as definite a quality as playing badminton; while the appreciation of literature is also a very recognizable quality which may be defined as having read all the right books that we ourselves have not.

ANDE.

"It has certainly prevented a number of incidents which, in time gone by, might easily have precipitated a war, in fact leading to armed conflict."—Report of speech.

What—with fighting?



## H. J.'s Dramatic Fragments

**I** WROTE this Fragment when flown with wine. We had been doing some experiments on fermentation in the laboratory and finally produced several Winchester jars of a clear red liquid which B. Smith thought from his knowledge of the technical literature might well be port. To test this hypothesis we divided the liquid between us and watched to see whether gout supervened; but unfortunately, by the time we had consumed it all, our powers of observation had deteriorated and been replaced by powers of imagination, which in my case led to Drama and in the case of my colleague to a series of ninety-four variations on the Highland Fling.

### FORSAKING ALL MOTHERS or NUPTIALS IN A NUTSHELL

*(The scene is the High Table of an Oxford College)*

**JUNIOR DEAN.** The Freshmen this year are a poor lot. Only Fitzroy-Webster-Bloggs will be much use to us. He should mulct well. I've had twenty-seven pounds five off him already.

**DOMESTIC BURSAR.** I'm gradually moving antiques into his rooms and sticking supplements on his rent. To-day he got the four-poster.

**SENIOR TUTOR.** He came up intending to read English; but I'm switching him to Sanscrit. It's so rarely we can provide Blenkinshaw with a pupil.

**THE PRESIDENT.** I think, on the whole, Poirot has a better brain than Maigret, beta plus as against beta minus I should say.

**ESTATES BURSAR.** Now Wimsey, there's a smell of an alpha about him, though I have met Fourths who were not dissimilar in conversation. Where would you place Lemmy Caution?

**THE PRESIDENT.** Forestry.

**PROFESSOR OF TURANIAN PHILOLOGY.** If I'd been cooking this I'd have added a spot of pimento. When we used to go vacationing in the log-shack I was always made cooky. Brother, my clams fried in buttermilk were sure heaven on the palate.

**READER IN STATISTICAL AESTHETICS.** Can you schnitzel? Most spiffing it eats.

**PROFESSOR OF TURANIAN PHILOLOGY.** My schnitzel was the best on the campus.

**CHAPLAIN.** Henry Ward Beecher met a hen. "Oh, you beautiful bird," he said. The hen was so pleased she laid an egg and so did hen reward Beecher. See it?

**PROFESSOR OF ANGLO-SAXON LAW.** Yes, why?

**LIBRARIAN.** Does anyone here know how to rebore a cylinder? I've spent all the morning trying and nothing seems to do it. I do so hate being beaten.

**PROFESSOR OF ANGLO-SAXON LAW.** I'll bring my brace-and-bit down to-morrow. I've got through all sorts of things with it and it just chews up metal. I should think I'm so good with it because of my unusually broad shoulders. When I was a rugger forward at school we used to pack one-three-four, and often the two rows behind had to hold me back.

**LIBRARIAN.** But I want to do it myself. I only asked for information.

**PROFESSOR OF ANGLO-SAXON LAW.** It's weak-minded not to rely on experts.

**THE OLDEST DON.** In what way can the mind be called "weak"? The brain of course can be weak in structure or function: but the mind is surely—

**PROFESSOR OF ANGLO-SAXON LAW.** Peace, Ancient.

**SENIOR TUTOR.** Snyme's First is rather doubtful. I said to him just before Hall: "If you can only get your sums right you have nothing to fear; but I do wish you would stop boasting about being a warlock."

**DOMESTIC BURSAR.** My chief worry is Wrigslaw. He insists he has discovered a deutero-Chaucer. It wouldn't matter so much in his Second Year; but he has only just over a term to go.

**JUNIOR DEAN.** Gate him.

**DOMESTIC BURSAR.** But he says he's willing to go to the stake about it. He drew one on an envelope to make his point clear.

**THE PRESIDENT.** I rate Roy Rogers very high, very high indeed. Tell me, what is your opinion of Fats Waller?

**ESTATES BURSAR.** Admiration qualified by a slight doubt of his soundness.

**THE PRESIDENT.** My sentiments exactly. You must be a mind-reader.

**THE OLDEST DON.** The metaphor seems to assume, quite unwarrantably, that the mind—

**THE PRESIDENT.** If you are not careful your food will be served to you on a tray in the College Muniment Room.

**A DONOR.** The trouble about the Bidding Prayer is that one gets rather lost in the list. Wouldn't it be better to print a few of the names in italics so that they could be emphasized?

**VICE-PRESIDENT.** Perhaps we could arrange for some loud chords on the organ.

**THE PRESIDENT.** Gentlemen, this being Queen Ælfrigga's Day, the Fellows will now partake of Robinson's Benefaction. *(Crackers are reverently pulled and Latin mottoes extracted.)*

**THE OLDEST DON** *(with disgust).* I've got "*Mens sana in corpore sano*": but the preposition "in" hypothesizes a spatial mind, whereas—

**THE PRESIDENT.** Remove this bauble! *(He is removed.)*  
FINIS



*"If you've done the crossword again you shan't fetch it to-morrow."*



"If I ever get through with these lessons I'll never drive a car again."

## After Giotto

AS I have had the following cutting tucked away in the corner of a small box-file for something like fourteen years it is evident that I must at one time have thought it pretty significant:

"Taylor told the court that after he had been teaching Alan's class about oblongs for four days he asked the boy how he could find the area of an oblong and he could not answer. He then asked him to draw an oblong on the blackboard and he drew a circle. Taylor thought the boy was just stubborn."

More details follow concerning what Taylor then did to impress Alan with the properties of oblongs.

"Oblong," according to my dictionary, means "long in one way, longer than broad; a rectangle longer than broad, any oblong figure." It is interesting to speculate on what Taylor found to fill four days with in this rather barren subject. Four days, after all, is a long time for even the most prolix

of pedagogues to devote to such a limited theme. "Now this morning, boys, we are going to talk about oblongs. Hands up any boy who can tell me what an oblong is."

"Please, sir, I can."

"Splendid, Arthur. Suppose you let us all know, then."

"Sir, it's a sort of thing, *you* know, this shape, sort of long one way and not quite so long the other, sir, and sort of square at the corners, sir, if you see what I mean."

"Yes, Arthur, I think we do see what you mean. You mean, don't you, it's a rectangular figure that's longer than it is broad, isn't that it?"

"Yes, sir, that's what I meant, sir."

There is phase one completed. The boys have been told what an oblong is. As no schoolmaster dare tell his class anything once only, we can double the time taken by that little passage of dialogue, so that altogether it occupies by my estimation eighty seconds. There is then a short intermezzo in

which Taylor asks the class if any of them can give him an example of an oblong; one of them suggests the blackboard, one the lid of his desk, one, whose parents are richer than the others, a pound note. Alan, who is sitting at the back of the room chewing gum and reading *Super-Horror Stories* disguised as an atlas, suggests St. Paul's Cathedral.

"Well, hardly," says the schoolmaster patiently.

"But it's longer than it's broad, sir, ain' it?"

"Well, yes, it certainly is."

"An' it's square at the corners, ain' it?"

"Yes, it's square at the corners, Alan."

"Well, then," says Alan triumphantly.

"But don't you see, boy, St. Paul's Cathedral is not a rectangular figure."

Alan goes back to his shocker and his gum. We have occupied at the outside a quarter of an hour. We can fill

another ten minutes explaining what a diagonal is, but even so we still have the greater part of our first hour left to teach the boys how they can find the area of an oblong. After we have taught them that, there really doesn't seem to be much more to say on the topic.

But Taylor—that was not the name in the cutting of course—Taylor filled four days talking about oblongs. Surely it was not poor little Alan who was stubborn, it was Taylor himself. Clearly oblongs were his hobby-horse. There was nothing he enjoyed so much as teaching boys about oblongs; the jokes, the anecdotes, the puns so dear to the pedagogical heart must have welled out during those four days in an endless gush of iteration, pleonasm, redundancy, tautophony and half a page more of Roget's synonyms for repetition.

At the end of it all, Alan (you have probably guessed that I am on his side) is called out in front of the class. How clearly that scene presents itself!

"Alan, what are you eating?"

"Not eating, sir."

"Then may I inquire what it is that makes your mouth move in the manner which civilized people are accustomed to associate with eating?"

"Yes, sir. I'm chewing, sir."

"Ah, indeed. Chewing. Suppose you come out here where we can all see you. So you are chewing, are you?"

"Yes, sir."

"No doubt you find that more profitable than paying attention to what I was saying. What was the last thing I said? Can you tell me?"

"Yes, sir, I can tell you. You said 'Alan, what are you eating?'"

This gambit is always good for a laugh against the master, so Taylor, in order to re-establish his position, must show up Alan's ignorance. "Very well," he says, "since you have been following me so closely, perhaps you will explain to the class how to find the area of an oblong."

Dead silence.

"Come along, now. Let us begin by drawing an oblong on the blackboard. Here you are. Here's the chalk."

Alan takes the chalk from Taylor's outstretched hand and goes to the blackboard. He stands for a moment with the chalk poised against the black shiny surface, then, blandly and confidently, he draws a circle.

Giotto also drew a circle on one memorable occasion. Giotto's was a perfect circle, or so nearly so as to satisfy all those present; whereas Alan's was probably more like a rather battered peardrop with a flattened "x" at the top where the end of the circumference failed to make contact

with the beginning. Still, it was a circle. After all, do we know what Giotto was trying to do when he drew his circle? For all we know, one of his pupils had said to him "Maestro, draw us an oblong," or a square, or an equilateral triangle. But Giotto, the supreme draughtsman, gave them a perfect circle.

Probably that is what Alan was trying to do too. If Taylor had been A. S. Neill or Bertrand Russell, Alan would have been highly commended and given another piece of chewing-gum to replace the one he had swallowed in his agitation. If the boy had had the presence of mind to blurt out "But that's how I see an oblong, sir," he would have been given a scholarship at the Slade. Instead he was probably treated to an impatient lecture on the necessity of listening to the wisdom which his masters took the trouble to unload on him.

Alan—that wasn't the name in the cutting, either—must be getting on for thirty by now. If he reads this, I would like him to know that I came down on his side when I first read about him, that I am still on his side, and that I always shall be unless Fate should ever send him to do a job of sign-painting for me. B. A. Y.

## The Dark Stranger

I DO not know you, stranger in the night,  
Your silent feet  
Do not disturb me, nor do they affright  
My heart's quiet beat.

I do not hear you come, nor is my sleep  
Broken with sighs,  
Hushed are the little toes on which  
you creep,  
Like butterflies.

No dire presentiments confuse my dreams  
As, phantom mouse,  
You mutely stroll, scheming your  
cursèd schemes,  
About my house.

Drugging and dark, the traitor night  
condones  
Your fiendish plots  
To tie the cords of all my telephones  
In hopeless knots. V. G.

"LOVELY AMERICAN OVERALLS  
Attractively styled with butter up front."  
Advt. in S. African paper.

Or would you prefer to do that  
yourself?



"Very well—back to modelling wax next week!"





"Now, my FIRST subconscious reaction, the moment I realized both intruders were armed . . ."

## Bowl of a Thousand Flowers

A CHINAMAN picked up a handful of clay  
And thought of a bowl with a petal-shaped side.  
He went to his wheel and with delicate play  
He span it and pinched it and fiddled away  
Till earth came to life and he chuckled with pride  
And bowed to it, set it apart to be dried.

From drying he took it along to be fired,  
Then scrubbed it and coaxed it in devious ways,  
Next painted it all as his fancy required—  
A Chinaman, artist-man, never gets tired—  
Then soused it well down in a bucket of glaze  
And fixed it for life in a fervour of blaze.

The shapes that he painted were asters and phlox,  
Wistaria, scabious, lily and broom,  
With roses and daisies and night-scented stocks  
And black smiling Susans and high hollyhocks.  
They covered the surface wherever was room.  
The bowl was a thousandfold posy of bloom.

The Chinaman spoke—"May the blessing of earth,  
Of fire and of blossom attend those who feel  
Through pattern for beauty and colour for mirth  
The joy that was mine as I brought you to birth."

He bowed once again and he turned on his heel.  
The bowl was complete. He went back to his wheel.

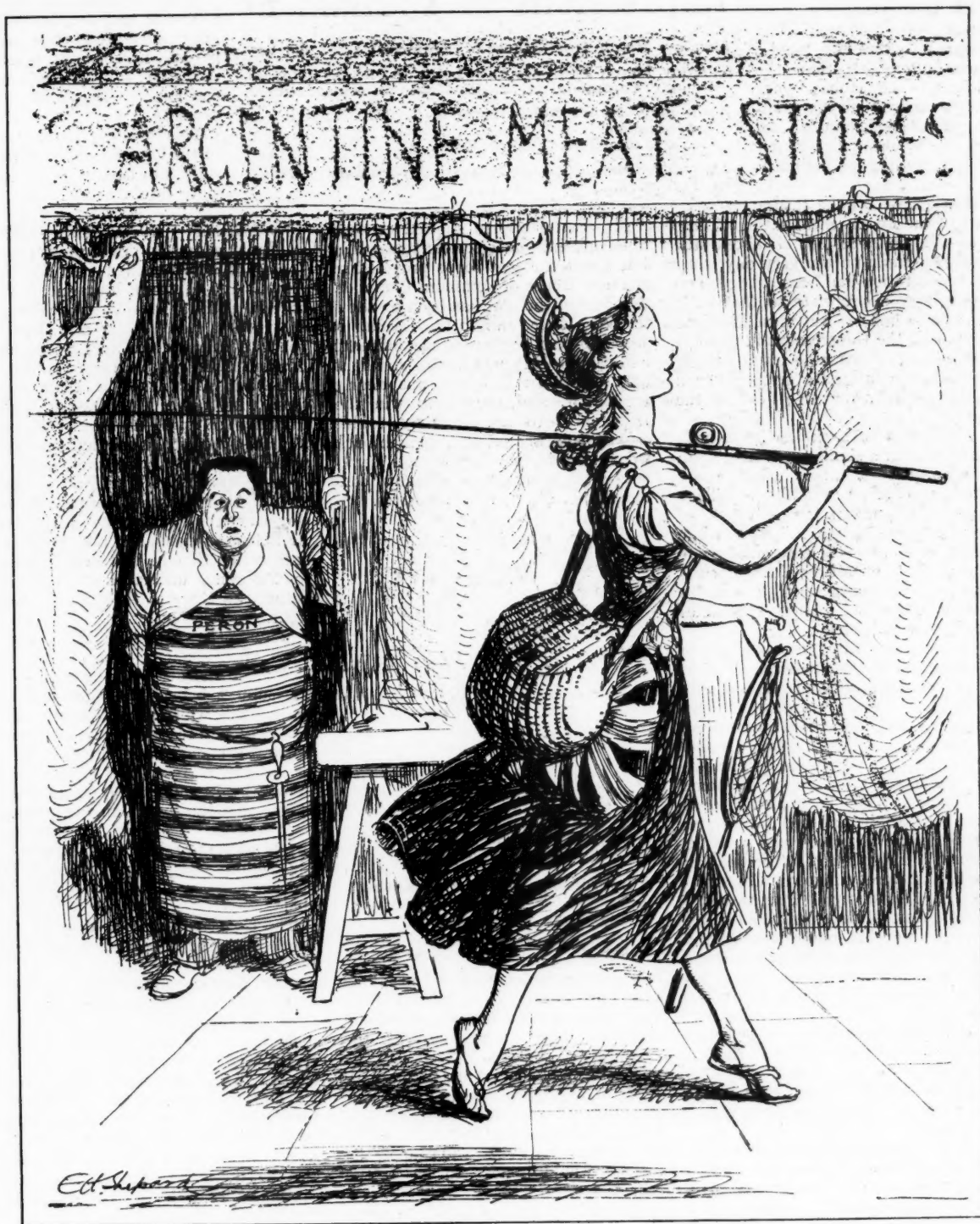
Then over the ocean his treasure was sent  
And came to a lady with sun in her hair.  
She bubbled delight and she hummed in content  
And into her garden a-seeking she went  
A cluster from here and a snippet from there—  
Her garden had colour and sunshine to spare.

The blossoms she favoured were lily and phlox,  
Convolvulus, scabious, asters and broom,  
With cornflowers, daisies and high hollyhocks,  
And black smiling Susans and night-scented stocks.  
They drank of the water, their scent filled the room,  
The bowl was twice over a thousand of bloom.

She floated a curtsy, in sunshine bedight,  
Then wished forth a wish through the blue far-  
away—

"May earth's coloured loveliness gladden your sight,  
The glow of achievement keep warm your delight,  
My artist-man dwelling in distant Cathay  
Who made me my bowl from the fire and the clay."

C. C. P.



### DEFIANCE

"'I'm going a-fishing, sir,' she said."

## MONDAY, March 28th.—

Delayed slightly by the press of Members who seemed to find the lobbies more interesting than the floor of the House, your scribe arrived in the Commons debating chamber just in time to hear Dr. EDITH SUMMERSKILL declare flatly and firmly that she would not speculate on the future size of the weekly meat ration. There was an ominous sound about the remark—made on the very day when the meat ration had been cut to something more appropriate to the larder of a doll's house. But most Members supported the Government in refusing to agree to extortionate trading terms with the Argentine Government, even if this meant a negative "cut off the joint."

As though to back the horse both ways (if such a simile is permissible in this context) Members asked many questions about vegetables. They sought explanation, for instance, of the curious allegation that while home producers of vegetables were (according to one of the Government's most fervid supporters) having to plough them in, foreign vegetables were being imported.

Mr. ATTLEE, called in to adjudicate in a supposed dispute between Mr. TOM WILLIAMS, Minister of Agriculture, and Mr. JOHN STRACHEY, Food Minister, on this issue, said that we had, in any case, to import some 400,000 tons of foreign vegetables to eke out the 3,000,000 tons grown at home each year. When he explained that these had to be ordered far ahead, when the size of home crops was still a secret of the gods and future weather conditions were unknown, Conservatives cried teasingly: "Plan them!"

The Prime Minister gained himself a cheer from his supporters by the retort that the Government could not plan the weather—a statement received with incredulous cries by the Opposition. The defence did not appear to be accepted as a "perfect answer to the charge" by critics on either side of the House, and Mr. RUPERT DE LA BÈRE (from Evesham) was heard to mutter ominously and cavernously.

Mr. VICTOR COLLINS, who normally supports the Government, come what may, ventured the careful comment that some Ministerial plans seemed to show "evidence of lack of sufficient consideration." Then he sat back, clearly astonished at his own severity. The Minister seemed at least as astonished. And both left it at that.

## Impressions of Parliament

Monday, March 28th.—House of Commons: Meat and Veg.

Tuesday, March 29th.—House of Lords: A Plea for Refugees.  
House of Commons: Mr. Attlee Makes an Announcement.

Wednesday, March 30th.—House of Lords: The Army of Occupation.

House of Commons: Demob. Suits.

Thursday, March 31st.—House of Commons: Budget Forecast?

Mr. TOM DRIBERG showed concern about his seat—not electorally speaking, but about the seat to be provided in the new House of Commons Chamber. A model of the seat has been on show for some time, and to the layman it seems to be of surpassing magnificence and comfort, in green leather and light oak. But Mr. DRIBERG was clearly against it, and sought to win the Minister of Works, Mr. KEY, to his side by pointing out that its high back would forbid the traditional semi-horizontal attitude of dreamy contemplation affected by Ministers.



Asif

### Impressions of Parliamentarians

79. Lord Winster

The Minister, impressed, promised that he would take advice from the Advisory Committee, whereupon Brigadier HEAD asked whether the Committee contained Members of various physical types and shapes.

Mr. KEY was non-committal about this, but, since it would be difficult to pick a committee of M.P.s which did not contain many sizes and shapes, the answer would appear to be in the affirmative.

The debate was on a Bill to allow the Coal Board to engage in the export trade, and Mr. HUGH GAITSKELL, the Minister of Fuel, shrewdly observed that, if the Conservatives had so low an opinion of the Board's

trading abilities as they professed to have, he could not understand their apparent nervousness about the advent of State competition in the sale of coal overseas.

This logic did not appeal to the Opposition, however, and the debate went on quite late.

TUESDAY, March 29th.—The Archbishop of YORK moved the House of Lords with a plea for the Arab refugees from Palestine. He urged that the Jews in Palestine should put right a great wrong now, lest in years to come, when they might not have so many powerful friends in the world, they might find themselves faced with tens of thousands of Arabs thirsting for revenge. But, such considerations apart, he felt that the Jews would themselves want to do justice.

LORD HENDERSON, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, expressed the Government's sympathy with the Archbishop's views, and LORD SAMUEL, announcing that he was shortly going to Palestine, undertook to tell the authorities there of the House's deep feeling in this matter.

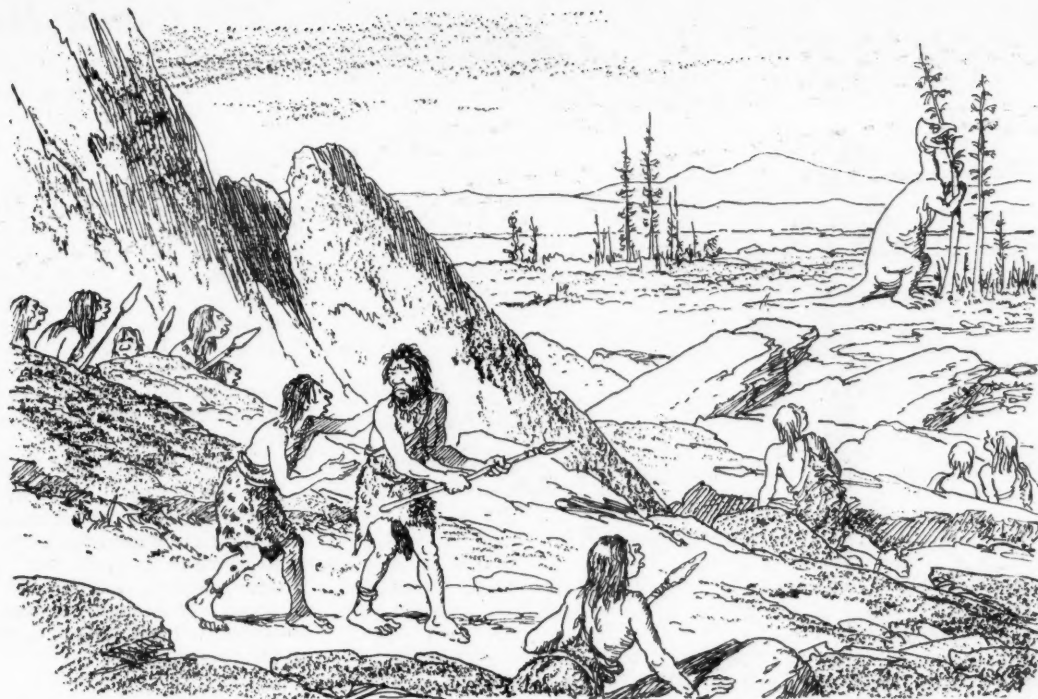
Before they reached this happy state of agreement their Lordships had twice defeated the Government, the subject being the Wireless Telegraphy Bill, which seeks to compel the fitting of suppressors to any electrical apparatus likely to interfere with radio or television reception. The first defeat (by 42 votes to 23) changed the Bill so that the cost of any suppressor need not exceed a florin. The second (by 44 to 17) provided that the cost of big suppression schemes should be shared between those taking part in them.

The Government, as it does in the Lords, shrugged its collective shoulders resignedly.

Mr. ATTLEE announced in the Commons that there is to be a meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers next month to talk about Constitutional problems not completely discussed at last autumn's conference. Mr. OLIVER STANLEY, for the Opposition, gained general cheers by wishing the conference all success. Asked whether the Communist menace would also be discussed, Mr. ATTLEE said cautiously that he preferred not to add to what he had said.

At Question-time Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, head of the Customs, gave a hint to would-be smugglers: "Sometimes, the best means of concealing a thing is to make it obvious." This





"Will you join the Anti-Blood-Sports League?"

piece of advice was followed by a complicated question from Sir WALDRON SMITHERS about a ham, which had been declared but instantly confiscated and hurled into a dust-bin by Customs officers. The Government reply caused Sir WALDRON to exclaim with heat: "If I had my way, I should put the Ministry of Food into a dust-bin!"

This put the House into a good humour, and the time passed happily, even when Mr. SHINWELL, the War Minister, came into action later in defence of the Army and Air Force Annual Bill. It was made clear to the Minister that a happy Army was one which has some local, as well as national, ties and loyalties, and Mr. SHINWELL, while holding that an Army must be available for duty anywhere, any time, promised to bear this fact in mind.

**WEDNESDAY, March 30th.**—Ten Members had tabled questions in the Commons demanding that "demob. suits" be provided for National Service men when they had completed their period of service. It was pointed out that these young men, at an age when they were growing rapidly, were liable to find themselves literally "unsuited," and it was argued that this left them with a sense of grievance. But Mr. A. V.

ALEXANDER, the Minister of Defence (who, remarkably often, seems to get left with the unpopular statements of Government policy) said it could not be done, that it would cost between three and four million pounds a year.

About two-thirds of the House promptly rose simultaneously and cross-examined the Minister. Every device of persuasion was tried—even the "poor widowed mother" was brought into the discussion—but Mr. ALEXANDER stuck to his (or the Cabinet's) point and said that, sorry as he was, he could not give way.

When the storm had raged for ten minutes, and showed signs of wanting to rage for a lot longer, Mr. Speaker called the next business.

A roaring cheer, by no means confined to the Opposition side, greeted Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, fresh back from a tour of the Commonwealth. He was tanned a deep brown and strode into the House with an athletic swing that delighted everyone.

Then the House sat until the small hours, talking about plans to develop parts of the country—South Wales and Merseyside—which once used to be called distressed areas.

In the House of Lords there was a discussion about the rival claims of the farmer and the soldier to the use of

land. Noble Lords made it clear that they recognized the need for land over which soldiers could train, but complained that, remarkably often, the soldier seemed to choose as his training ground the best agricultural land. Lord DE LA WARR, for instance, said that the military, by their triumphant occupation of farm land, were depriving the country every year of milk rations for 900,000 or meat rations for 1,000,000.

Lord HAWKE swooped on to the Minister of Town and Country Planning and expressed the view that he "hadn't a hope" of standing up to the Service Ministers, with their prestige and powerful Departments. But Lord HUNTINGDON replied that only 14,000 acres of the 700,000 acres used by the Forces were arable land.

**THURSDAY, March 31st.**—Mr. EDEN asked why, for the first time in twenty-five years, the Budget was to be opened on a Wednesday, instead of Monday or Tuesday. Was it that the London County Council elections fell on the Thursday, and that electoral advantage might arise from the Budget? Mr. MORRISON replied, with an injured air, that he had not thought of that—a statement received with loud doubt by the Opposition.

## The Cosmic Mess

THIS column has been much impressed by a recent study of the daily papers, and the feverish efforts they are making to force their readers to read their papers. In the bad old days of Tory misrule a newspaper page was an orderly and almost uniform affair. There would be headings to tell you the subject of the article or story below: but the article or story would generally be done in print of the same size and hue throughout. In those dreadful days, too, they were not afraid of long paragraphs, and they did not start a new paragraph until the sense demanded it.

### FOUR LINES

All that has gone. In these enlightened days the assumption is that the citizen cannot be trusted to read more than about four lines of prose without losing his grip. Without continued shocks and goads he will fall asleep or pass on to another column.

This column has had a disquieting thought. Perhaps nobody reads this column with its old-fashioned, gentle ways. In future, it will try to hold you with more modern devices. In fact, if you are not careful, it will boast that it is a "streamlined" column.

### HIGH TENSION

It hopes, for example, that many of you were stung into attention by that sudden outcrop of black type. And now how are you enjoying these jolly italics? They bring out the point wonderfully, do they not? But we must not overdo it. Let us lower the tension.

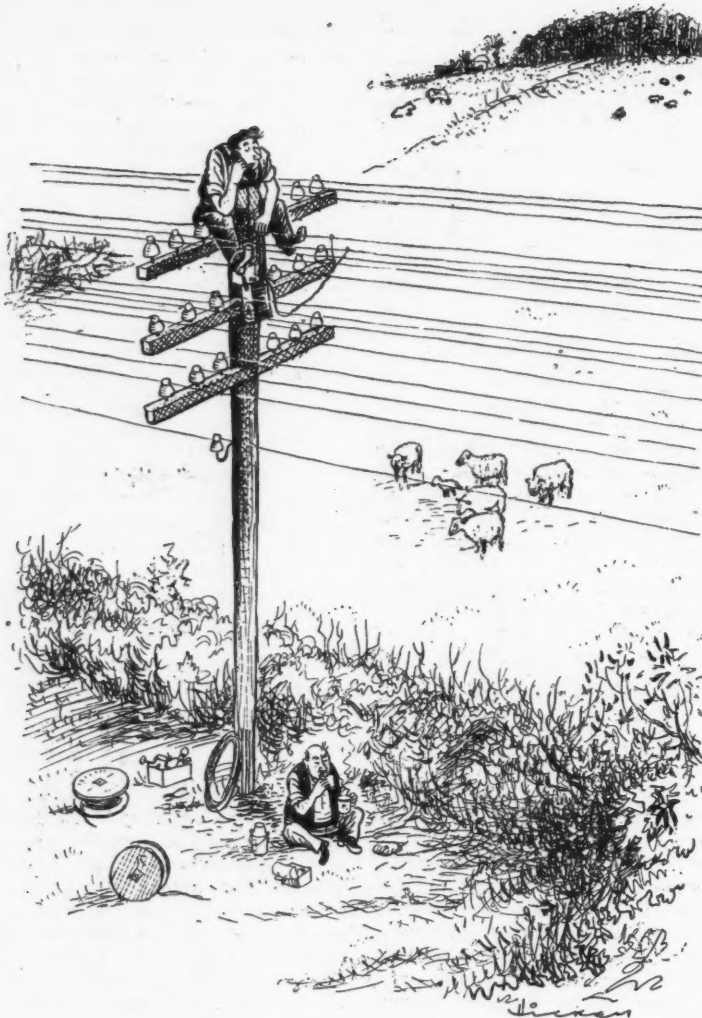
Now, if you can stand a few lines of Roman type, will you please consider the cunning use of sub-headings.

There is, of course, not the smallest point in sub-headings. The main heading has already done its job and attracted, or repelled, the reader. Once he has started reading he cannot want to be told what the next paragraph is about. Either he is interested or he is not.

No, the sub-headings spring from the same assumption, that if you leave the reader alone for an instant he will drop off or do the crossword puzzle. The sight of all that consecutive prose will stupefy him. So you "break up" the page.

### EXPLANATION WANTED

Nobody has ever explained, by the way, why, if you must "break-up" the



"Mr. Harrigan's at lunch. Could I take a message?"

## Under the Hammer

WHEN I was in the B.B.C. Department of Variety They sent me to an auction sale

Down on a farm in Wensleydale.  
I had a simple job to do—  
It was, to buy a B-flat moo,  
A stave or two of sparrows' tweets  
With half a dozen baas of bleats.  
When I arrived upon the scene  
I found the competition keen . . .  
A girl in jodhpurs, wearing stirrups,  
Was snapping up the chickens' chirrups,

Impressionists were stuffing sacks  
With whinnies, nickers, clucks and quacks,

And Dr. Ludwig Koch had bought  
A most exclusive swinish snort  
Which has, I understand, since been  
Much heard in "Country Magazine."  
As I stood in the failing light  
Reflecting on this striking sight  
It suddenly occurred to me  
That scenes like this, you know,  
must be

Much commoner than one suspects  
When farmers auction their Effects.

page of a newspaper, you should not break up the pages of a novel, and have dear little sub-headings in historical or philosophical works. There it is.

As a matter of fact, these sub-headings are the bane of the writer. So far from assisting him by riveting the attention of the reader, as often as not they must distract it and send it astray. For the sub-editor (or whoever it is) seldom seems to put much thought into his sub-headings. He picks out the first word that catches his eye and promotes it—sometimes with a nice little line under it—whether it has to do with the main point of the paragraph or not. If the reader reads the sub-heading (and there is not a lot of evidence that he does) he stops at the end of the paragraph and thinks: "Now why on earth did the silly author put that at the top?"

Sometimes, too, when the article has to be cut at the last minute "for reasons of space", the words which have prompted the sub-heading are removed. But the sub-heading remains:

#### MILD AND BITTER

Can you wonder that so many authors are sour and bitter men?

That is called a "box." It grips you, does it not? You can't stop reading this column now.

#### DUTY DONE

And another thing. You are asked to write an article—"about one thousand two hundred words". You are inspired, you overflow, you write one thousand five hundred words. With grief, with agony, you cut out three hundred of your beautiful words. The article no longer seems to make much sense; but you have done your duty. When it appears you find that it has been savagely cut about again. It now seems to make no sense at all. Some of the most telling phrases have gone.

And why has this been done?

To make space for a lot of imbecile sub-headings like the one above.

THIS IS ABSOLUTELY MADDENING.

Now

a

few

words

about

paragraphs.

Is this streamlined column holding your attention? Good.

Well, suppose that the author has written as follows:

"A Member of Parliament, in a

letter to *The Times*, has made the startling assertion that '20 per cent. of Englishmen aged twenty-one are illiterate.' No one has contradicted him. The P.R.O. to the Ministry of Education remains silent. So we must assume that one in every five men-in-the-street is unable to read or write, to fill-up a football-pool or pension form, or to recognize the name of a public house.

"What is the meaning of this alarming estimate? Can it be that we are on the way back to pre-alphabet days, when human communication was mainly by sound or pictures, the painting on the cave-wall, the tom-tom and the jungle-cry? There is much to be said for this view. Radio and the talking picture have made reading much less necessary than it was to the entertainment and instruction of Man. It is noticeable, too, that the most popular newspapers are now composed almost entirely of pictures and comic 'strips,' with a few paragraphs of printed matter, like straw in a case of wine, to fill up the cracks.

"The Member of Parliament attributes this state of affairs to the difficulty of learning to spell the English language. He thinks that the present 'wave of crime' may have the same cause. Young men, driven mad by the inconsistent pronunciation of 'cough', 'tough', and 'though', go off and beat old women on the head, rob banks, or murder their girl-friends. The German language, on the other hand, is held up as a model of rational and easy spelling. But these advantages do not seem to have restrained a good many German-speaking persons from a good many acts of mischief and violence in the days of Hitler."

So many words—only three paragraphs—and no sub-headings! A sub-editor on one of the *St. Vitus* papers would go mad at the sight.

The whole thing would be headed, probably,

Can You Read? says M.P.

There would be a new paragraph at "The P.R.O. . . .", wrecking the sequence of thought. Then we should have

What is the meaning of this?

followed by the sub-heading:

Tom-tom-talk

Most of the sentences that follow would be made into paragraphs on their own. But special care would be taken to make one paragraph of the sentences beginning. "It is noticeable . . ." and "The Member of

Parliament . . .", and to start a new paragraph at "He thinks . . .", in order to annoy the author.

Are you awake? Good!

A. P. H.

#### Spring

My senses like a toddied Hottentot  
Exult to hear that tune so long  
unheard.

Whistle again, O bird!—if you were  
bird:

If you were just an errand-boy, do not.







"Yes, I'm beginning to get sort of interested in boys, but I'm sure I'll never really LIKE one."

## Loose Leaves from My Autobiography

**M**OST duels, I suppose, have arisen from some nonsense about a woman, or simply because one man has unequivocally called another a cad. My duel with Clarence Snailwell was of quite a different kind.

We were staying at the time with Hugo Fitzhugo in his mouldering manor house in Essex. He was a bachelor, who, though of ample means, believed that nothing good had happened since 1485. He lived uncomfortably in a knightly dream which left a rather simple expression on his face, devoting himself to the acquisition of a formidable collection of primitive weapons which hung in menacing clusters round his damp-stained and unplumbed walls. The only part of the house in good condition was the cellar, and consequently the annual feast of lampreys, swans, neat's

tongues and suchlike which he gave to commemorate the, to me, somewhat shady tactics of the Black Prince at Poitiers was pretty well attended by his older and thirstier friends.

It was towards the close of one of these indigestible banquets, which rarely broke up before dawn, that I became embroiled with Snailwell. Being a man who would very willingly rob his grandmother, as, in fact, he was later discovered to have done, he was a sentimental idealist, and while we cooled our heads together at an open window he referred in absurdly flattering terms to the beauty of the sun, rising over the distant marshlands. I replied that it reminded me of nothing so much as an overripe blood orange. He insisted that the harmonies of dawn were perhaps our chiefest joy. I told him I found the whole business, not excluding the disgusting noises of the

birds, in the worst possible taste, and I added that I considered Nature to be the arch-vulgarian. Our dispute took heat until, in a silence in which you could have heard a boar's head drop, he flung the dregs of his flagon in my face.

This was of course the very thing for which our host had for many years been hoping. Leaping upon the table he cried that choice of weapons lay with me. I looked long round the Great Hall.

"It shall be cross-bows," I said haughtily . . .

Our weapons were extremely heavy and had to be wound up like grandfather clocks. Snailwell and I stood back to back on the wet lawn, swaying a little in the cold morning air.

"March!" cried Fitzhugo, and—when we seemed to have been walking for some time—"Fire!"

I was the first to pull my trigger when we swung about. There was a dull twang as if somebody had kicked a cistern and the arrow flew uncertainly for a few yards before plunging into a rosebush. When Snailwell fired nothing happened at all, because, as we afterwards found, mice were nesting in the mechanism. It was very disappointing.

"A draw," ruled our host. "And Clarence chooses weapons for the next round."

"Boomerangs," said Snailwell, without a moment's hesitation.

At this there was a rush to the house which left him and me alone, facing one another awkwardly with our hands still full of old iron.

"A singularly lovely sunrise," he cried defiantly.

"A botch of cheap pinks bungled by an amateur," I answered.

We were given three large boomerangs each and again told to march. At the command "Fire!" my opponent was first into action. His weapon, however, flew backwards out of his hand during a preliminary flourish and caught one of our fellow-guests a blow in the stomach. The man, a stock-broker named Bellamy, fell head-on against a statue of Pan and suffered a mild concussion. My own opening stroke was more successful. That is to say, the boomerang went forwards for a little way. It then came back with incredible speed, giving one of my seconds a nasty gash on the shin. Snailwell's next effort flew straight into the sun and was never seen again. Mine went off like a homing pigeon towards the peach-house, which it met with a very satisfactory sound. The third volley left our hands at the same moment, locked in mid-air halfway down the pitch, and showered the spectators plentifully with aboriginal splinters.

It was now decided by Fitzhugo that so indeterminate a contest could only be settled by recourse to battle, and Snailwell and I, hotly protesting, were thrust into complete suits of armour and told to get on with it. His was topped by the conventional coal-scuttle of heraldry, mine with a sort of washing-up basin trimmed with fishing-net. Our weapons were spiked iron balls attached to short poles by heavy pieces of chain, and neither of us found them very handy. Vision was much restricted, and movement all but impossible. Occasionally we succeeded in lifting the ball high enough to tap the other lightly, but as our armour was designed to withstand a battering-ram it all seemed very hopeless.

In this manner we teetered about the

lawn, Snailwell hissing at me from under the coal-scuttle and I hissing back at him through a crack in the washing-up basin. It was extraordinarily exhausting. We were still at it when the gong went for breakfast, and a rush of feet told us that once again we were alone. Unfortunately at that moment I was in the act of scoring on Snailwell's hauberk, and as a result of this we both went down. Not, however, on the lawn but into the lily-pool, where we lay side by side in about two feet of green water.

"There has never been a lovelier morning," gurgled Snailwell, through a mouthful of tadpoles.

"Done in icing-sugar for the Chantry Bequest," I gasped, pulling a frog out of my jambard.

I think we both slept for a little after that, and then we were awakened by a muffled "Strewth!" behind us. It was the postman. He was a bustling, muscular fellow with an instinct for fifteenth-century mechanics, and he seemed pleased to learn that anything he liked was his. Together Snailwell and I walked up to the house in silence. At the top of the terrace we paused.

"Snailwell," I began.

"My dear old boy," said Snailwell. ERIC.

o o

Puff

"FOR SALE, blown up tyred Child's TRICYCLE, in good condition."

Advt. in local paper.



"I don't like the way he keeps moping around complaining of having nothing to do."

## At the Play

*Daphne Laureola* (WYNDHAM'S)—*Belinda Fair* (SAVILLE)—*Summer in December* (COMEDY)

MR. BRIDIE is of all living British playwrights the most difficult to assess. His originality, which appears to come from some inexhaustible northern spring, overflows the common

three characters is magnificently conceived by Mr. BRIDIE and interpreted with equal magnificence by Miss EDITH EVANS.

It all starts peacefully in a shabby

restaurant in Soho, the kind that has one asthmatic waiter and not a lot left on the menu. There is a young foreigner dining studiously with Adam Smith's "Wealth of Nations," and at the other tables are a couple of solidly masticating business-men and a youthful quartette from an outer suburb; while in the corner is a middle-aged lady in an exquisite evening dress. She looks gravely into the depths of the double brandies she is drinking at the rate of about one every three minutes, until suddenly to the general horror she begins to sing, not in any maud-

lin love. In her response we see how much heartache lies behind her daughterly affection for her husband. In the following scene the old gentleman, who has calmly observed their embraces, disposes of the Pole in an exceedingly civilized manner; after which, very movingly and without any fuss, he dies. Mr. FELIX AYLMER plays him most beautifully.

The third act brings us back to the restaurant, where all our friends are gathered. The last to enter is the lady, with her new husband, the chauffeur. The Pole is passionately angry. There is a long and bitter scene, until the lady, much humiliated, puts him roundly in his place and leaves. Although both she and he are immensely effective, it seems to me that Mr. BRIDIE lays on his incidental comedy too thickly here. The kindly, cigar-puffing tradesman, in whom Mr. FRANK PETTINGELL finds a rich vein of earthy humour, is sufficient worldly chorus without the easier laughs which come from giggling youth.

The main strength of the piece lies in its highly unorthodox, extremely sensitive study of deep unhappiness. As *Lady Pitts* goes out brokenly we feel we know her intimately enough to be truly sorry. Miss EVANS has never dealt more surely with any part. Our best actress is given an opportunity fitting to her talent, and for once not in a revival.

Apart from the three I have mentioned, Mr. PETER FINCH arrives indisputably as the Pole, a fine blend of fire and blethering romanticism, and Mr. MARTIN MILLER is the epitome of all the weary old men who come flatfooted with the tidings that duckling is off. This intoxicating mix-up, in which wisdom and humanity predominate, is feelingly directed by Mr. MURRAY MACDONALD, and its title is vaguely connected, through a small laurel in a tub, with the legend of Daphne and Apollo.

The lovely girl who goes to the wars in the place of a craven and after unheard-of gallantry fetches up in the arms of her colonel is a pretty safe start for a musical piece, and Mr. ERIC MASCHWITZ and Mr. GILBERT LENNOX turn it to good account in *Belinda Fair*, at the Saville. Marlborough's campaign before Blenheim is ideal for their purpose: picturesque, admirably lax as regards staff discipline, and offering in the wig the perfect camouflage for maiden curls. When the colonel decides to send a female spy to elicit the enemy plans from the doddering French commander, *Belinda*, still believed to be a promising subaltern,



[*Daphne Laureola*]

### APOLLO SURPRISED

Ernest Piaste  
Lady Pitts  
Sir Joseph Pitts

MR. PETER FINCH  
DAME EDITH EVANS  
MR. FELIX AYLMER

banks of the modern stage and assumes queer and puzzling shapes. He can be maddeningly trivial and yet the next moment take your breath away with the wealth of an idea or the beauty in a phrase. He is not afraid of comic riots at which most dramatists would blench, and at the same time he is prepared to hang his biggest moments on the quietest possible pegs. He is a poet in the pub, a philosopher in the drawing-room, and always, if I may say so with the utmost respect, the most impish of our entertainers. Is *Daphne Laureola* at Wyndham's a good play? I prefer to dodge this question by saying it is scarcely a play at all, but rather a superb tragicomic charade for three characters set against a background of agreeable nonsense, which is sometimes worth having and is sometimes—well, a little thin and more than a little irrelevant; and by saying that the most important of the

lin manner but as you or I might in a particularly pleasant bath. Discouraged by the waiter, she falls into a long silence and then, when her outraged neighbours have settled again to the normal futilities of the table, she shatters them once more by pulling out odd fragments of her life in the singsong voice of a clairvoyant. As the lady is of surpassing charm she very soon melts the company and makes a slave of the chivalrous young Pole; and before she is led away brusquely by her chauffeur she has invited the whole boiling to tea. In all this spirited absurdity Miss EVANS is gloriously good.

The next act starts with the tea-party, which is, for Mr. BRIDIE, rather mechanical stuff. The lady turns out to have a title and to be married to an ancient sage. She has no recollection of her guests, but when they have gone the Pole stays on and ardently declares



puts on a dazzling frock unaccountably packed in her saddle-bag and gets the job; and when the ancient general proves to be an awkwardly amorous young rake, the jam might have been serious if this had not been musical comedy with her colonel waiting outside the window to lend a hand. They come within an ace of being hanged, the colonel deliciously discovering in the condemned cell the truth about *Belinda*; but again this is musical comedy and what are British troops for if not for well-timed rescue? *Belinda* is bravely played by Miss ADELE DIXON and the *Colonel* by Mr. JOHN BATTLES, both of them having voices which match Mr. JACK STRACHEY's handsome tunes.

The recipe, all the same, is one which might easily have turned to sugar. That it doesn't is due partly to the constantly astringent humour of Mr. JERRY VERO as *Belinda's* faithful attendant—the neatest pantomime fooling—and to a thoughtful whim by which Queen Anne's War Office dispatched to the front a party of dubious actresses, led by Miss DAPHNE ANDERSON with a bawdy dash which carries all before it. She is given several sharply pointed lyrics, and the way she sings them brings down the house. "The Gay Little Ladies of Drury Lane" and "Sweet Nellie Gwynne" are likely to be winners in the larger world where painters whistle and bus-conductors hum. While these operations are in train in Holland, Sussex is kept in order as near-apologetically as is physically possible by Mr. BILL STEPHENS' fire-eating squire, who welcomes home the happy couple.

The whole production, under Mr. CHARLES GOLDNER, has an unforced gaiety. It is good to look at and to listen to, and the choruses are sung with martial enthusiasm. If Romance with a fairly large R is your choice, the Saville provides it.

Small seaside hotels offer ample sport to the sociologist. The hotel in *Summer in December*, a mild little comedy, is even more out of hand than usual because of its proprietress's habit of walking off her private sadnesses on the cliffs, when she might have been keeping order in the lounge. Here, drama stalks incessantly round the sofa. There is the schoolboy, driven to tears by his choleric uncle and soothed by the maternal schoolgirl; there is the happily married pair driven apart by a bitter holiday vamp; there is the schoolgirl's father, crushed by his wife's desertion and hesitant to tell his child the truth. (Would many

film-going children of fourteen need to be told it?) Everything comes right in the end of course, thanks to the nice young man who is waiting to marry the proprietress and who is played attractively by Mr. FRANK LAWTON, and to a dynamo of generosity below-stairs, a part perfectly suited to that genius of Cockney nonsense, Miss IRENE HANDLE.

MISS ROSALYN BOULTER gives the proprietress five-star graces, and Mr. FRANK ROYDE adds a nice touch as a peripatetic foreigner. This is a thoroughly sentimental piece which creaks a good deal between passages of genuine charm and humour. Mr. JAMES LIGGAT wrote it, and you will find it at the Comedy. ERIC.



(Summer in December)

#### FRESH AIR FROM THE KITCHEN

Nigel Wainwright . . . . . MR. FRANK LAWTON  
Effie . . . . . MISS IRENE HANDLE

### Young Contemporaries

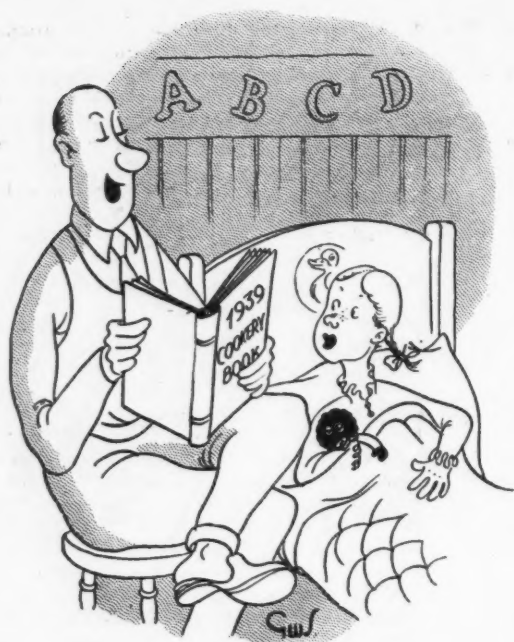
A FIRST comprehensive exhibition of their work by the students of some thirty art schools in Greater London is being held at the R.B.A. Galleries, Suffolk Street, until April 9th. The assembly of four hundred paintings, drawings, prints and small-scale sculpture reflects a variety of contemporary movements, and the level of achievement is remarkably high.

In the first gallery two assured works in the Euston Road manner deserve attention—Julia Rushbury's "Self Portrait," painted with rare refinement, and a luminous "Still Life" of fruit by Heather Homewood—and the next room is dominated by perhaps the most imaginative, certainly the most ambitious, composition in the exhibition. This is Claude Harrison's "Portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Simmons," which seems to suggest that this student of the Royal College of Art may follow in the footsteps of the late Rex Whistler.

In student exhibitions it is not unusual to find the drawing weak and tentative; but here a high standard has been set, largely with the help of a group of imaginative coloured lithographs by students of the Royal College of Art. Joan Beales's wash drawing of "Paris" and her demure Edwardian "Woman in a Railway Carriage," together with a delicate

sketch of a "Corn Stook," by Andrew Dodds, drawn with an admirable economy of line are companions worthy of any contemporary collection. In the sculpture section it must suffice only to single out a most sensitively modelled head of a young negress in bronzed plaster, by Wladyslaw Blasiak.

To mark the historic associations that exist between Lincolnshire and Holland, the Usher Art Gallery, Lincoln, is displaying an important loan exhibition of Dutch painting of the latter half of the nineteenth century which will be seen in time elsewhere. The Schools of the Hague and Amsterdam Impressionists of this period represent a late flowering of the genius for realistic detail, combined with a delicate perception of light and atmosphere, which characterizes the great age of Dutch art. There is little of the glitter of French Impressionism in this collection; rather the paintings are subdued in tone, fastidious in brushwork, and lyrical in feeling. William Roelofs and Josef Israels, who reverted to the traditional aim a hundred years ago, are well represented; and perhaps the best exponent of Impressionism as we understand the term is Isaac Israels, who lightened his palette when he moved to Paris and has a number of fascinating works here of this period. N. A. D. W.



"Once upon a time take six eggs . . ."

### Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

#### Thurber Mixture

MR. JAMES THURBER once wrote of his drawings that they "sometimes seem to have reached completion by some other route than the common one of intent." In a chapter of *The Beast in Me, and Other Animals* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 12/6) he takes the matter further, earnestly dilating, with examples, on the five categories into which his drawings fall (or are pushed). Later in the book comes an unexpected group of drawings that must be put in a sixth category: "A Gallery of Real Creatures" is as near as anything in THURBER to what might be called naturalism. But most of this admirable volume is prose, most of it admirable prose. It is strange that in lavishing superlatives on the work of this wonderful humorist (and "humorist" is a word much too limited in implication) the average reviewer seldom ventures to observe how well he writes: not merely how funny, subtle and penetrating his essays and stories are, but how beautifully he handles words. Here, besides essays, parodies and stories of characteristic felicity, are two sections of a different kind: his exhaustive critical study of the daytime radio serial, and a handful of the pieces he wrote for the *New Yorker's* "Talk of the Town" years ago. These are object-lessons in the entertaining presentation of fact, and they are full of excellent writing too.

R. M.

#### Fighter for Peace

Startlingly modest, conspicuously self-effacing, elaborately simple, Viscount CECIL of CHELWOOD in his autobiography—*All the Way* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 21/-)—either declines to share his real life with a circle of

readers or perhaps admits that the son of a Prime Minister, whose boyhood home was half palace, half barracks, and whose own life-work has been done in a flare of publicity can never become quite an ordinary human mortal. Inevitably almost from his first page he lives among great affairs, and though he begins by trying hard to keep away from weighty discussion, remembering, for instance, how he failed to manage his chop-sticks during an early visit to Japan and how the coachman on the box was mistaken for the guest of honour by native servants at a South African house where he made a visit of state, yet he is perpetually driven back to those great affairs that still claim his interest. The fact is that compared with his zeal for world settlement nothing else does matter much, so that although he has already told the story of his connection with the League of Nations here it is again. He has been more often an active onlooker than a star performer in home politics and compared with the work and the love and the genius that he has given, not all in vain, to the hope of world peace, his legal and parliamentary career is not much remembered even by himself.

C. C. P.

#### Lister

In *Joseph Lister* (HEINEMANN, 17/6), Mr. HECTOR CHARLES CAMERON, son of a colleague and life-long friend of Lister, reveals as a human being a man who to most of us has been only a great name. The son of a wealthy Quaker, Lister did not have to contend against poverty in his youth. His chief trouble throughout his life was a certain diffidence which had its origin in his very high standards. Bernard Shaw, in his ill-informed attack on Lister, speaks of his manual dexterity as a surgeon as below the average. Actually, though not so brilliant an operator as his master, James Syme, Lister was thoroughly reliable; but his genius lay elsewhere. The great work of his life was in combating hospital sepsis, which had grown immensely since the Industrial Revolution. "It seemed almost," Mr. CAMERON writes, "as if labouring man was doomed to extinction, exterminated by epidemics of loathsome diseases such as the present generation has met with only in the concentration camps of Hitler." Mr. CAMERON explains clearly Lister's technique for overcoming hospital sepsis. In spite of his enemies, Lister did not believe in irrigating wounds with carbolic acid. He used antiseptic to keep germs from reaching a wound; he did not use antiseptic to heal the wound itself. Lister's private life was unusually happy, until the death of his wife in 1893, when he was in the middle sixties. She possessed the zest and confidence he lacked, and without her he found little pleasure in his fame.

H. K.

#### Archæologist's Bride

Why, one wonders, did Mrs. ELEANOR LOTHROP recount three fascinating archæological adventures in the rattle-pated style indicated by her title? *Throw Me a Bone* (LEHMANN, 15/-) is what the discerning Chicago reviewer calls "the gayest gripe." It depicts a honeymoon spent in a derelict Chilean nitrate town; a subsequent sojourn in a Guatemalan village where no white man had dared to linger since the eighteenth century; and a full-dress archæologist's camp in Panama, financed by Harvard University. Tombs, their treasures and the light they shed on primitive civilizations were the objectives in all three cases. Taltal, to which the happy pair arrived by cattle-boat, introduced the bride to the insect-ridden squalor in

which research on Indian origins is usually pursued; and she lent herself gallantly to being broken in as a working partner. Atitlan was magnificent and terrifying. (The local god, with three superimposed felt hats on his mask, shared an unprecedented Holy Week with what his clients remembered of Christianity.) The Panama excavations, at Sitio Conte in Coclé, turned out to be one of the most spectacular ever undertaken in the New World. Harvard had bought the first treasures disclosed by a river that, changing its course, cut through the burial-ground of a hitherto unknown civilization. The Lothrop finds recall some of the marvels of Tutankhamen's tomb.

H. P. E.

### A Likely Lad from Derry

Although he died when he was twenty-nine, George Farquhar packed enough experience for three men into his wild, inquisitive and brilliant life. Born of a clerical family in the North of Ireland, he came to England after a few years in Dublin as an exhibitor at Trinity and an indifferent actor at the little theatre in Smock Alley. 1697 was a wonderful moment to arrive in London for a promising youth of twenty burning to write plays. At Will's Coffee-house he found no less a company than Dryden, Congreve, Wycherley and Vanbrugh. He plunged into the life of the town, yet within two years he had established himself with "A Trip to the Jubilee." Lack of money and an unhappy marriage drove him into the Army, and the result was "The Recruiting Officer"; dissipation and overwork wrecked his health, and he died miserably in a loft off the Strand just after his best play, "The Beaux' Stratagem," had taken London by storm. All this is very readably described by Mr. WILLARD CONNELLY in *Young George Farquhar* (CASSELL, 21/-). Occasionally the reader trips up over phrases like "yielded up the ghost" and "a spot of work," but the book is thorough and is carefully indexed and annotated. Too much space is given perhaps to the extravagant love-letters which poured from its hopelessly susceptible subject (who regularly published them, with the replies!) and also to the atrocious couplets to which the age could sink. At the same time both are a reminder that some of its authors really lived the lives they mirrored on the stage. Farquhar comes out of this portrait difficult, conceited, but likeable, a man of astonishing vitality and exceptional talent, who had already suggested to the English theatre the way out of the Restoration impasse and might himself easily have taken it farther.

E. O. D. K.

### A New Short-Story Writer

*The Wrong Set* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 8/6) is a collection of short stories by a new writer, Mr. ANGUS WILSON. Mr. WILSON is brilliant in description, having a keen eye for relevant details and only very rarely indulging in description for its own sake. A seedy night-club, a staff dance in a South Kensington hotel, a walk on the outskirts of a French provincial town, a family picnic in an English wood—each is evoked with as few touches as are necessary to a complete picture. But Mr. WILSON is not only a skilled impressionist. The setting and atmosphere of his stories are subordinate to their dramatic interest. His characters, though we are often admitted to their private reflections, reveal themselves chiefly in collision with one another. Yet in spite of the author's delicate eye for detail, in spite of his subtle characterization and narrative and dramatic power, the total impression left by this volume is unsatisfactory. After a time one gets the

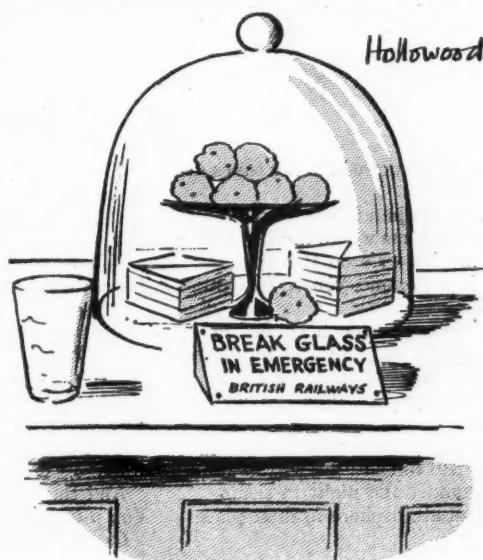
feeling that Mr. WILSON is resolved not to compromise his insight into human nature by allowing any of his characters even a moment of disinterested affection or enjoyment. His attitude to them is one of cold disgusted curiosity, and under his baleful scrutiny they dwindle from living persons into marionettes. Behind this frozen front there are occasional signs (for instance, in Richard in "Et Dona Ferentes") of a great deal of suppressed sympathy which, if it could be released, would raise Mr. WILSON's work to a much higher level.

H. K.

### Facts and Fictions

Any novel that deals with the political life of Palestine must, inevitably, be compared with the work of Arthur Koestler; and though *The Dome of the Rock*, by SOMERSET DE CHAIR (FALCON PRESS, 8/6), is inferior to "Thieves in the Night" it is a remarkable piece of work. Mr. DE CHAIR's aim has been to produce the whole tangled skein of Arab-Jewish-and-British affairs some years before the final explosion; he has attempted (successfully) to present each view-point of the contesting races with honest detachment; and as if this was not enough to try the talents of any author, he has also thrown in discussions of Einstein's theory and the whole problem of Christianity and Moslem worship. This book's fault, consequently, is that Mr. DE CHAIR has attempted to cram too much into a small space. The first sixty pages (which give a potted, and therefore superficial, history of the Crusades as well as establishing the characters) hold up the very vivid action which follows. But once past this point the drama of love, hate, tensions and conflicting loyalties makes wholly absorbing reading. As the reader follows the intense adventures of Angelica, the Arab girl-saint (not perhaps a very convincing character), or the Jewish girl Louscha's love-affair with a British officer (an original and powerful episode), or Inspector Brook of the Palestine police force, or Captain Carew, with his English reflexes, the whole fabric, colour and smell of Palestine come alive. There are also interesting glimpses of real characters—Glubb Pasha, General Wavell, King Ibn Saud—as well as pages of acute insight into the ways, means, and attitudes of all the races involved. On the whole it is an excellent book.

R. K.





## The Chinchilly Plot

I SHOULD never have done it, but that Mickey Gorman has a tongue you can't resist. I reckon he must have fallen over and hung 'on the Blarney Stone for a month by his braces. I've never seen him talk a bird off a tree, but he certainly talked Mrs. McAinstrie's rabbit out of my hutch. And after her trusting me with it while she went to Edinburgh. And me well in—six months her chauffeur steady—a miracle for me. I'd begun to think I was set for life till this fat little Mickey Gorman, with his nicked felt hat all fish-hooks and his short jacket all greasy, put his tongue to my ear and seduced my allegiance. And I ought to have known him. Not a dog in the parish went missing, or a fancy cat, or an egg, but that character had a hand in it somewhere.

A bachelor cottage I had from her, with a white wood fence. It was on that fence Mickey leaned his arms and chin and said: "It's a fine Chinchilly rabbit ye have in that hutch, Allistair McTurk."

"It belongs to herself," says I. "There's a show on at Killoggstoun. The prizes are tremenjous allurin'. Chinchilly rabbits—first prize, two quid. Could ye be doin' with a quid about now?"

"Get beyond the swing o' me hand, Mick Gorman," I warned him, for me weaknesses are known to me.

"'Tis but seven miles," he says, eyeing me sideways. "And that car gettin' colder be the hour. And the Chinchilly sickenin' for a breath of air, be the dull eyes av him. And you with not a poipe of baccy on the long length

av you. You could fill yer poipe for a quid, Allistair McTurk."

Now, blame me if you like, but the car was there, the rabbit was there, and, worst of all, Mickey Gorman was there. And a quid's a quid.

We parked the car in a lane, and into the show we went, just in time to enter the Chinchilla—in Mick Gorman's name. They gave us a hutch at the end of the row, and we put the rabbit in, and had a stroll round the opposition. The two quid was as good as ours—we could see that. So back we went and gave the rabbit a last dressing over while we waited for the judges.

Then I heard a voice. "I just couldn't resist the show, my dear Mrs. Robinson. I had to come back for it. I'll just spend the night at home—"

"Then you'll have to have dinner with us, Mrs. McAinstrie," says a female voice, as I dived under the bench beneath the hutch, and Mickey Gorman drops the canvas front and stands before it, whistling innocent. Under the canvas I saw her feet stop.

"Why, Gorman," she says, suspiciously. "I didn't know you were an exhibitor."

"Just occasional, ma'am," says he—"just occasional."

"May I see your entry?" she asks, pushing him aside. "Why, it's very like my Chinchilla."

"Perhaps it is, knowing Gorman," says this Mrs. Robinson, who'd be riding a witch's broom right now if there was power in wishing.

"I can soon tell," says Mrs. McAinstrie. "If I whistle he'll tap with

his hind legs twice, ever so gently and delicately—twice."

She lets out a cooing kind of whistle. Desperately, I hit the underside of the hutch with the ball of me fist three knocks to drive a tent-peg.

I don't know whether her or the rabbit jumped the highest, but when she came down she says "That creature certainly isn't mine—the coarse brute." And without a word to Mick she flounces off, her heels clicking angrily. I lets my breath out and eased my collar, and before I had time to get out the judges came round, and I had to stay where I was and hear us get the first prize, presented on the spot.

When I got out I took Mick Gorman by the neck with one hand, and the rabbit by the neck in the other, and we were on the road and at Mick's house in half an hour. We didn't wait there a minute, for he says "You've time enough, and her dinin' at that woman's. Come down to the King's Arms till we get this prize divid."

It took a wee while dividing it, then back to Mickey Gorman's we went, and I had the last decent meal to the time of writing.

I had my eye on the clock, and at last I says "It's me for the road, Mickey, if I'm to beat her home."

"Hi, Missus," he shouts to his wife. "Allistair McTurk's lavin'. Where's that rabbit in the bag we left?"

"Rabbit," says she. "That's it ye've just ett. Ye never netted one like that before."

I let out one yell of anguish, and the fish-fly I hooked in my thumb off his hat paid for the one I left in the lobe of his ear.

## Going On After

I KNOW a spot where the tunes are hot

And the hands are hotter still;  
So come with me where the fun is free  
But the butter's on the bill.

If you just pretend you're someone's friend

And swear you've been before  
You can walk right in and buy a gin  
For the price of three or four.

Oh, come, my pet! For the smarter set

Are surging there like sheep;  
It's frightful fun and it's just not done  
To squander the night in sleep.

There's an atmosphere in these places,  
dear,

That gives you a chance to live;  
A kind of a jerk that crochet work  
Can never completely give.

For this is a dive for jitter and jive  
Where a man can have his cling;  
Where you find the floor and shout for more

And they play "God Save the King."

Oh, the things they say in the Cabaret  
And the little bits they wear!  
You don't get those with dominoes  
Or Dickens on the air.

The cosy crush and the hectic flush  
And the trashy way one talks;  
You miss all that if you nurse the cat  
Or go for moonlight walks.

And the creamy sweet you can choose to eat

If you grab the waiter's sleeve  
And the thing he'll bring like soapy string

When it's nearly time to leave.  
Oh, a man can spend no end on end  
On soda water there

And it's far more fun than a fruitless bun

From the family Glacière.  
And the thrill, my plum, when the time has come

For laughter and song to cease,  
And you crush your dress in the dark recess

Where you hide from the police.



ANNALS OF A BRANCH LINE

I—Curious Technical Hitch at the Official Inauguration

## The Radio Dramatist

### XIV

**I**NACCURACY in matters of fact, like so many of the pitfalls that beset the path of the playwright, has much more serious consequences on the radio than on the stage. Let us imagine a scene in which two astronomers meet to celebrate Galileo's birthday in a glass of wine. "Here's to Betelgeux!" exclaims the first. "Five hundred light years away and going farther all the time. What a star!" I hardly know a parsec from a red giant and I must admit that I should feel more at home among the Governors of the B.B.C. than among the great spiral nebulae, but let us suppose that Betelgeux is in fact six hundred light years distant. What will be the effect of a slip such as this on a theatre audience? In the first place, is there an astronomer in the house? I consider that the odds are against it. Secondly, if an astronomer is indeed present, what sort of a man is he? Is he likely to create a disturbance? If not, what action will he take? We must remember that in astronomy startling discoveries are being made and discredited speculations cast aside almost every day. If our astronomer is at all a cautious man I believe that he will venture no more than a tentative sounding of a fellow-worker. "Betelgeux is a pretty long way off," he might say casually, and if he got more than a suspicious look and an evasive answer I should be very much surprised. To sum up, it is my opinion that on the stage a slip such as this would probably do little damage. Not so on the radio. In an audience of millions there are bound to be a good many astronomers, and some at least of these will be confident, self-assertive men who will make themselves heard.

Can we doubt that before long the Astronomer Royal himself will be pricked into action? The Governors of the B.B.C. will not thank a young dramatist for involving them in a brawl with the Astronomer Royal.

A good deal of work is submitted to me for criticism and in this I find that by far the most common fault is inaccuracy. I have before me at this moment a play which I received a few days ago. The heroine of the piece is a laundress who finds a precious stone in what the author is pleased to call the "rinsing tank." I cannot feel that the following excerpt gives a true picture of life in a modern laundry.

*Overseer.* Sections A and B, prepare to enter the rinsing tank! At the word "One!" the front rank will take two paces forward, placing the arms akimbo. At "Two!" the knees will be bent preparatory to a smart leap into the tank, which will be made on the word "Hup!" At "Three!" the whole rank will move forward in orderly fashion and take up a position on the gents' outsize flannel trousers. The procedure will be repeated with ranks 2 to 4. Rank 2 will tread youths' sports shirts; Rank 3, ladies' stockings and gents' pensioner type chest-protectors; Rank 4, gents' pyjamas. At the word "Four!" all ranks will break into double mark-time, knees well up, arms akimbo. One! Two! Hup! (The sound of a heavy splash is heard.) Three! (A medley of splashes and words of command.) Four! (The splashing is redoubled.)

*Overseer.* One two, one two, one two, one two!

*Assistant.* Miss Potts wishes to ask a question.

*Overseer.* At the word "One!" Miss

Potts will double smartly to the side of the tank. At "One two!" she will catapult herself out as best she can, move briskly forward and put her question.

*Miss Potts.* Arms akimbo?

*Overseer.* The arms will be allowed to swing naturally at the sides. One! One two!

*Miss Potts.* What'll I do with this 'ere chrysoberyl? Etc., etc.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the writer is hopelessly out of touch with his subject. I have myself never visited a laundry, but I possess a reliable encyclopaedia and with its help I have put together a few lines which seem to me a little nearer to what is required.

*Overseer.* A shirt is missing. I wonder, Miss Potts, if you would be good enough to search the inner horizontal cylindrical cage?

*Miss Potts.* Not me! That thing fair gives me the creeps! I don't mind having a look in that there centrifugal extractor. It'll likely be in the perforated copper basket what revolves rapidly inside the iron case.

*Assistant.* The Decoudon-type ironer has broken down. For some reason the felted roller has stopped rotating against the heated concave bed of polished steel.

*Overseer.* Get out the hand-irons! We must—

*Miss Potts.* Look at this 'ere chrysoberyl I found in the copper basket!

I fancy that this rings a little truer than reckless fantasies of laundresses leaping into rinsing tanks with their arms akimbo, and if the author is of the same opinion let him by all means substitute my dialogue for his own and try his luck with the B.B.C.



Gay-

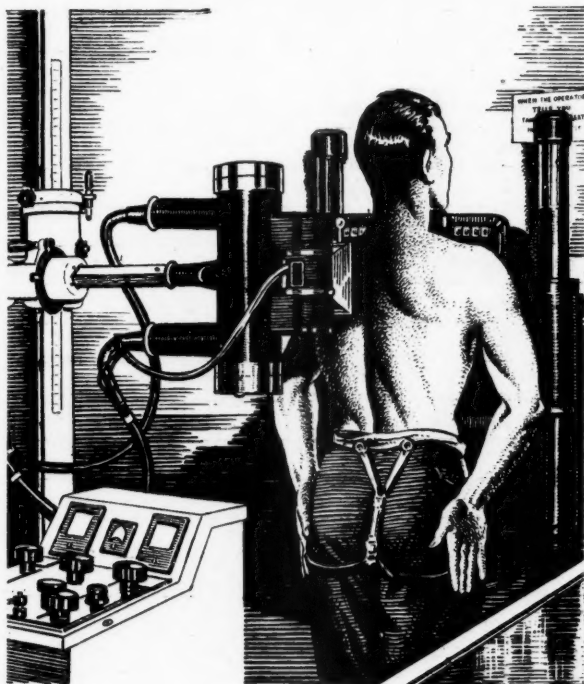
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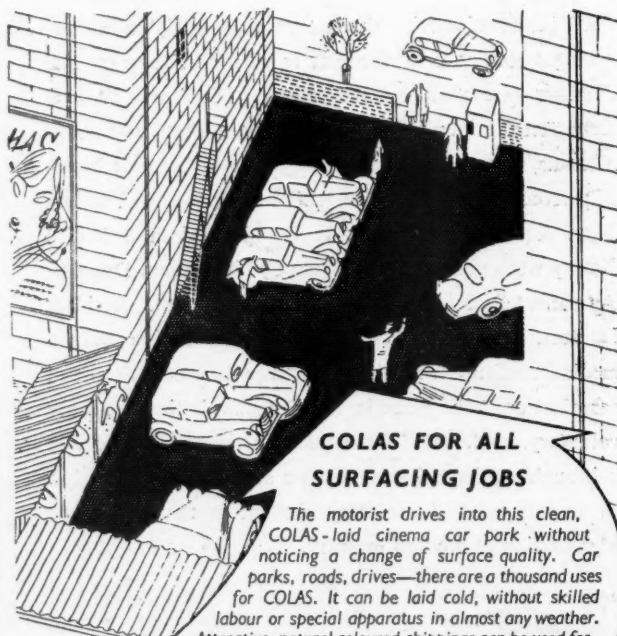


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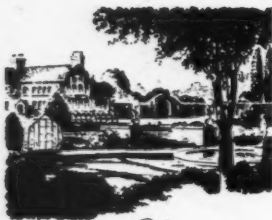


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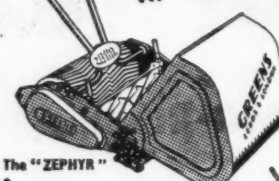
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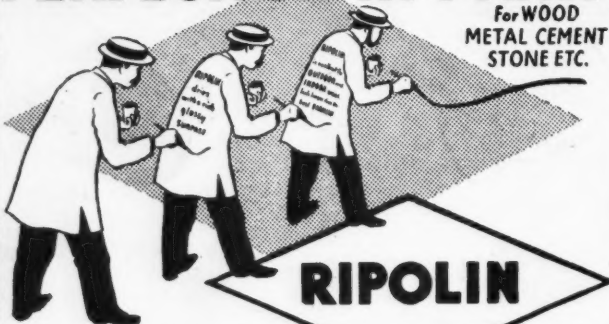
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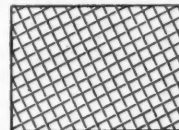
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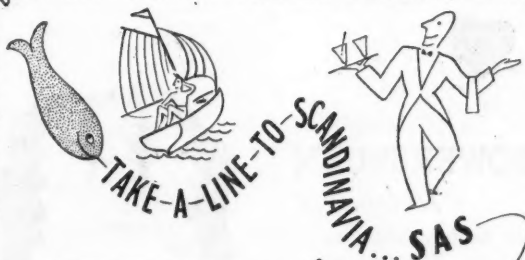
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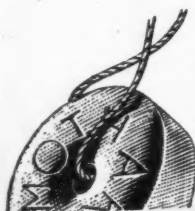
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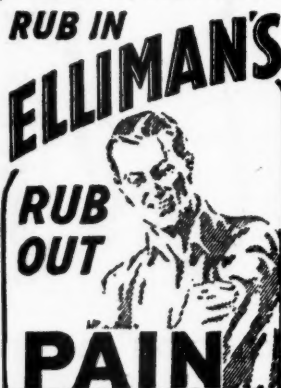
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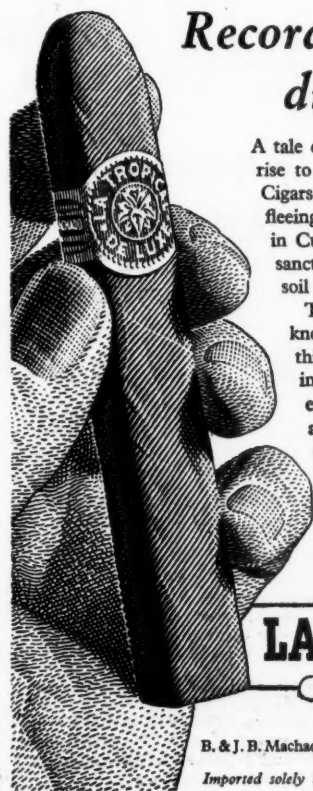
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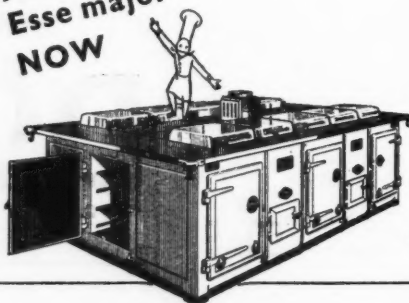


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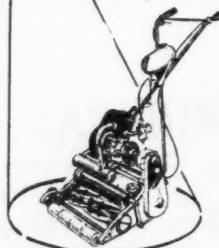
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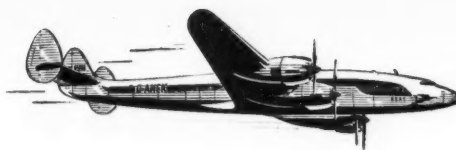
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